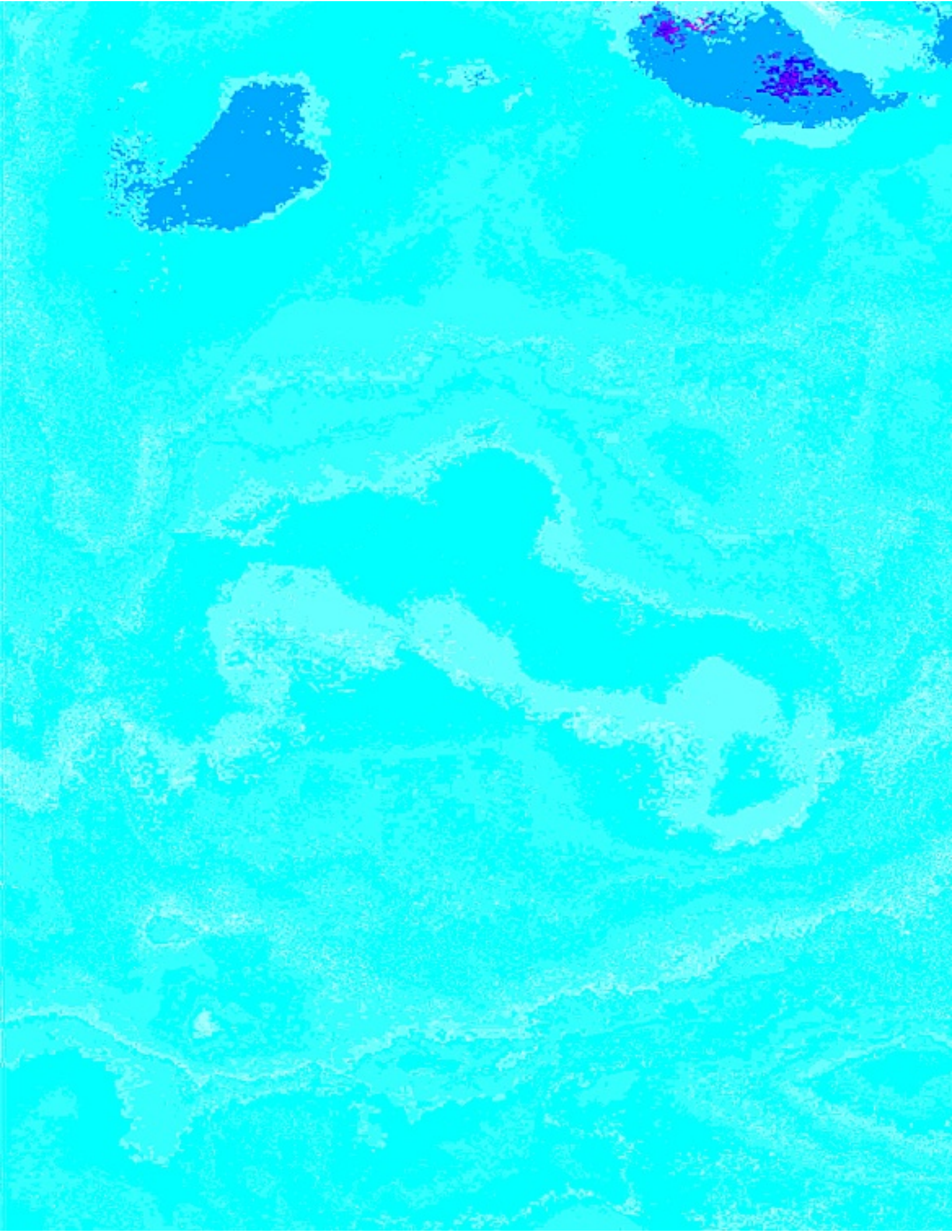
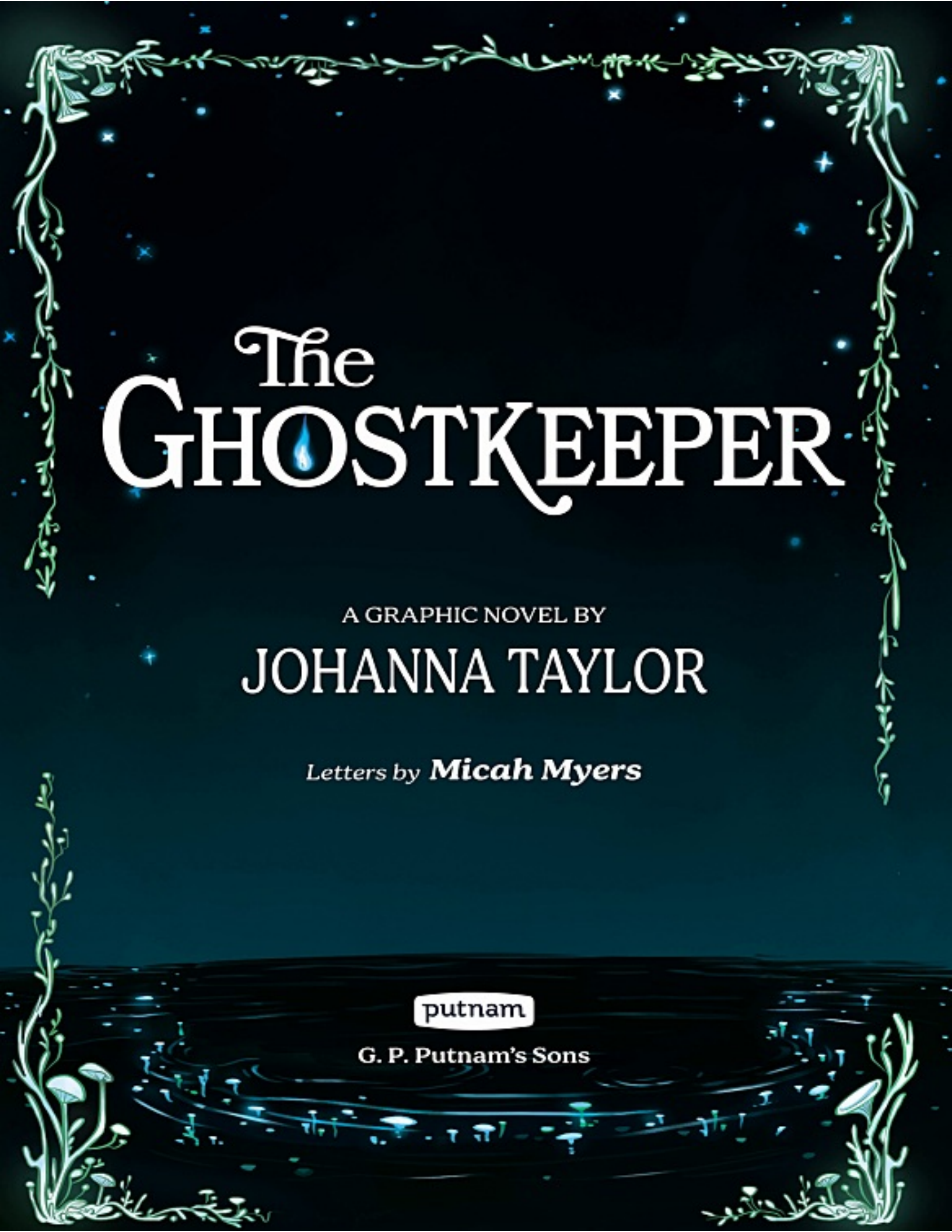
The
GHOSTKEEPER
A GRAPHIC NOVEL BY
JOHANNA TAYLOR

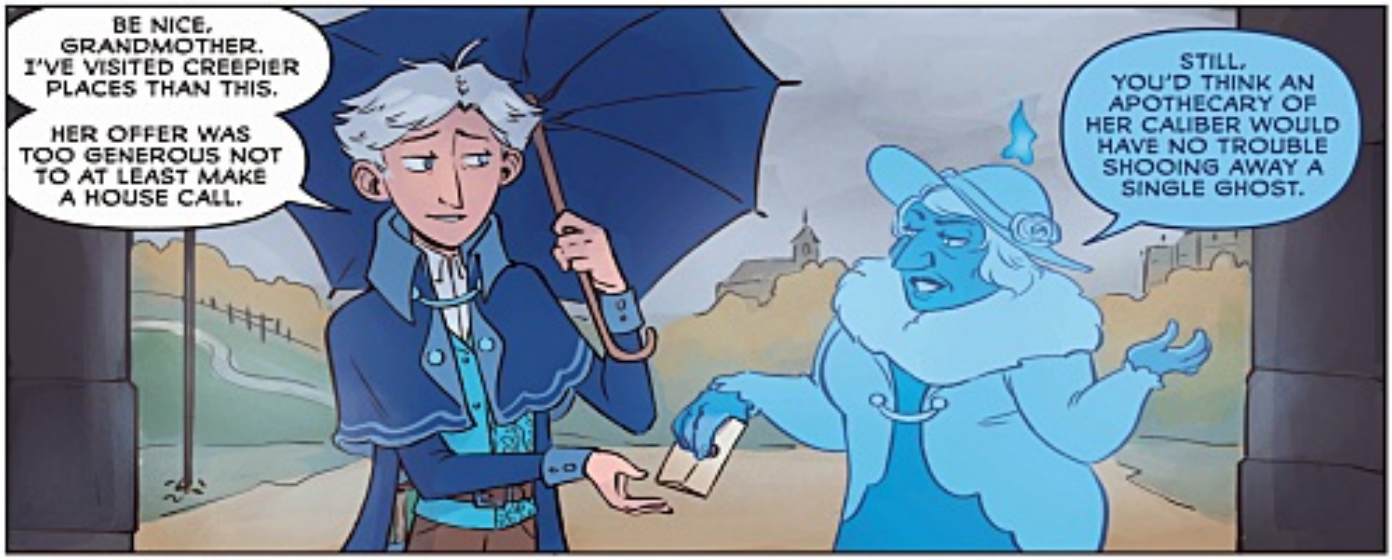



The
GHOSTKEEPER
A GRAPHIC NOVEL BY
JOHANNA TAYLOR
Letters by Micah Myers
putnam
G. P. Putnam's Sons

*To my mom, and to all others like her who*
*help everyone else before taking care of themselves*

*The Ghostkeeper* is a story about coping with grief, loss, death, anxiety, burnout, and trauma. Although its narrative is ultimately one of healing and hope, the story contains frank discussions about and depictions of the deaths of adults and children, emotional abuse, mental illness stigma, and brief scenes of body horror.

WHEN A HOUSE IS BESET WITH A GREAT AND TERRIBLE HAUNTING, PEOPLE IN ROOKWOOD SEND FOR AN EXORCIST.
BUT WHEN THE HAUNTING IS, BY ALL ACCOUNTS, RATHER MILD...
THEY SEND FOR ME.
PRUDENCE GREEVES LIVES HERE?
THAT'S WHAT THE LETTER SAYS.
IT'S QUITE, UM...
STATELY.
STATELY? DORIAN, THIS ISN'T A MANOR, IT'S A MORGUE!

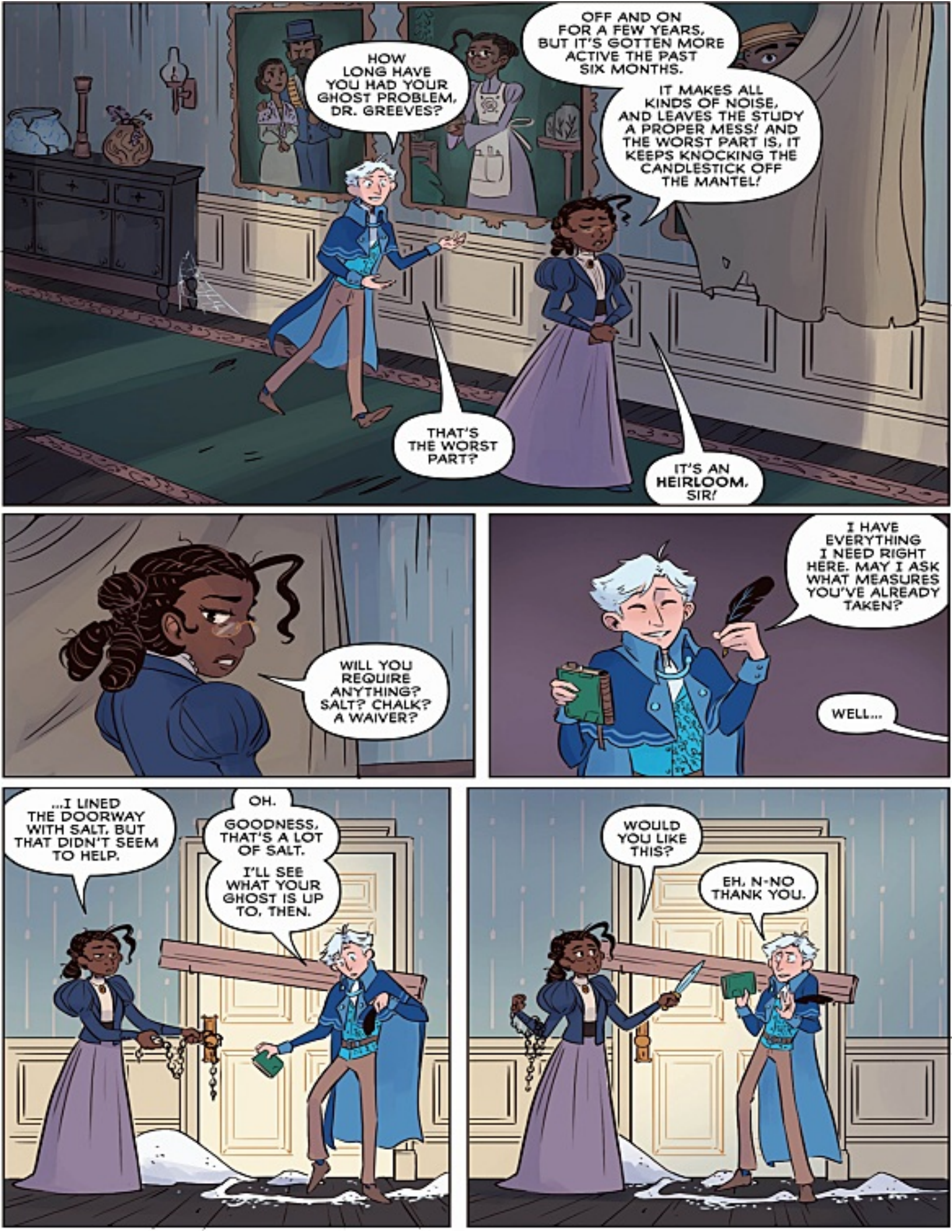

BE NICE, GRANDMOTHER. I'VE VISITED CREEPIER PLACES THAN THIS.
HER OFFER WAS TOO GENEROUS NOT TO AT LEAST MAKE A HOUSE CALL.
STILL, YOU'D THINK AN APOTHECARY OF HER CALIBER WOULD HAVE NO TROUBLE SHOOING AWAY A SINGLE GHOST.

WELL, MOST PEOPLE CAN'T SEE THEM.

I'M SURE SHE'S FINE...
KNOCK, KNOCK!

CREEAAAKK!

STAY BACK, GHOST!!
WAIT, WAIT! I'M DORIAN!
THE GHOST SPECIALIST? THAT YOU HIRED?
O-OH! MR. LEITH, I'M SO SORRY! I THOUGHT YOU WERE THE GHOST!
AND IF I WAS, YOUR PLAN WAS TO STAB ME?
NO...I SUPPOSE THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN ILLOGICAL.
INSIDE, QUICKLY! YOU'RE LETTING MORE GHOSTS IN!
SO THIS IS HOW I DIE.
SEE YOU ON THE OTHER SIDE, DORIE...
ONE WAY OR ANOTHER.


HOW LONG HAVE YOU HAD YOUR GHOST PROBLEM, DR. GREEVES?
OFF AND ON FOR A FEW YEARS, BUT IT'S GOTTEN MORE ACTIVE THE PAST SIX MONTHS.
IT MAKES ALL KINDS OF NOISE, AND LEAVES THE STUDY A PROPER MESS! AND THE WORST PART IS, IT KEEPS KNOCKING THE CANDLESTICK OFF THE MANTEL!
THAT'S THE WORST PART?
IT'S AN HEIRLOOM, SIR!
WILL YOU REQUIRE ANYTHING? SALT? CHALK? A WAIVER?
I HAVE EVERYTHING I NEED RIGHT HERE. MAY I ASK WHAT MEASURES YOU'VE ALREADY TAKEN?
WELL...
...I LINED THE DOORWAY WITH SALT, BUT THAT DIDN'T SEEM TO HELP.
OH. GOODNESS, THAT'S A LOT OF SALT.
I'LL SEE WHAT YOUR GHOST IS UP TO, THEN.
WOULD YOU LIKE THIS?
EH, N-NO THANK YOU.

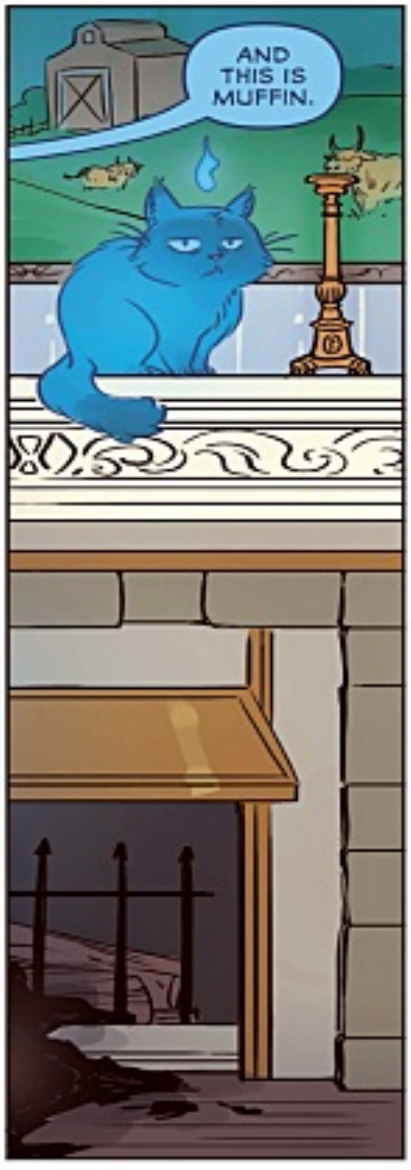
I'LL BE IN THE GREENHOUSE.
COME FIND ME WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED.
WELL...
LET'S SEE WHAT TERRORS LURK BEHIND THIS DOOR, THEN.
HELLO, GHOST? I'M-
OH!
HULLO, THERE! I WAS HOPING YOU'D COME!
YOU'RE THE THERAPIST, RIGHT?

YES! THERE ARE A LOT MORE OF YOU THAN I EXPECTED.
I'M DORIAN LEITH, BUT I SUPPOSE YOU KNOW THAT ALREADY?

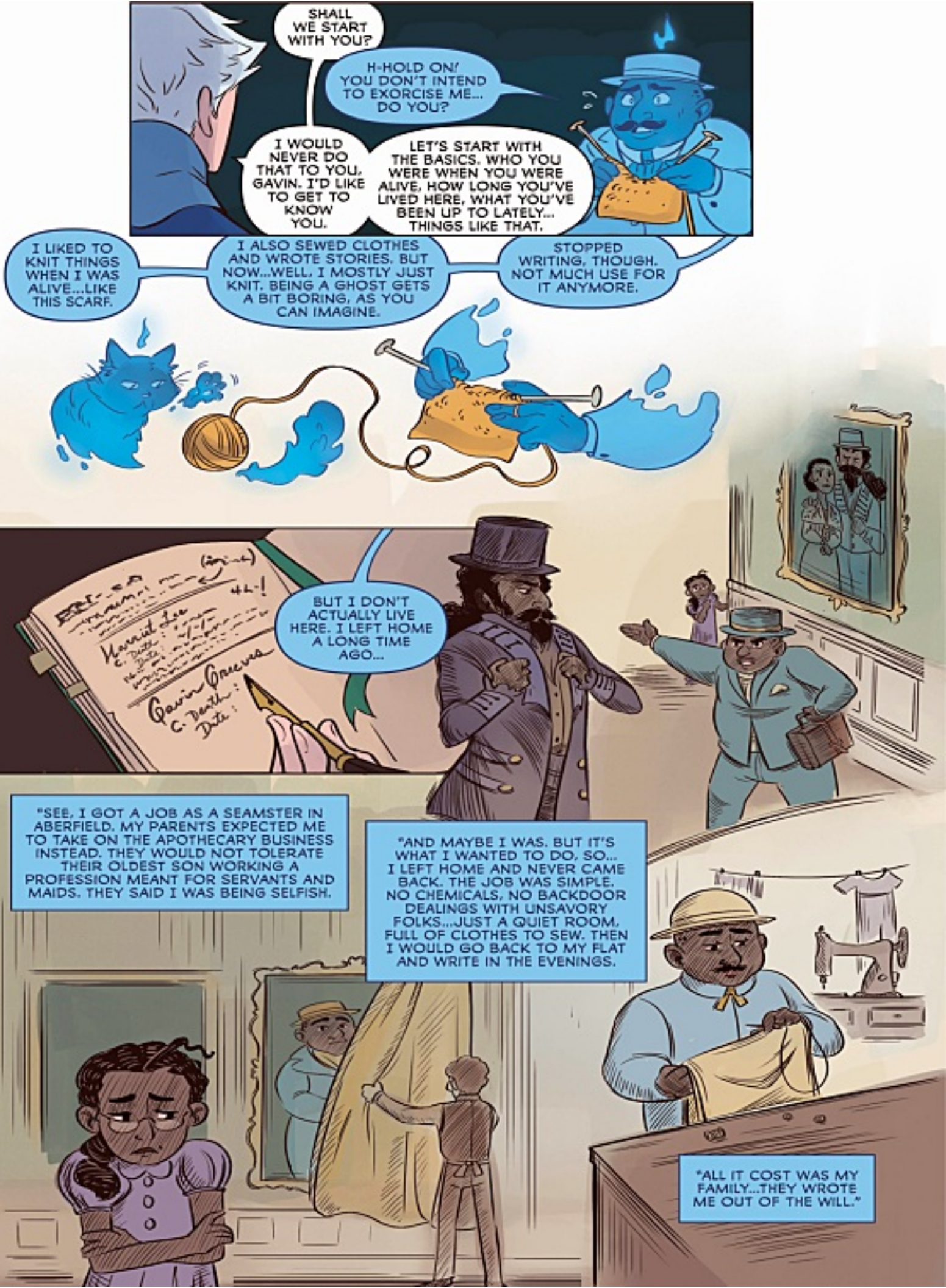
SURE DO! I'M GAVIN GREEVES. I SEE YOU MET MY SISTER, PRUDENCE.
YOUR SISTER?
SHE OWNS THE HOUSE NOW, LUCKY STIFF.
OR I GUESS I'M THE STIFF IN THIS SCENARIO.
HEH HEH. HEH...
ANYWAY... COME MEET THE OTHERS!

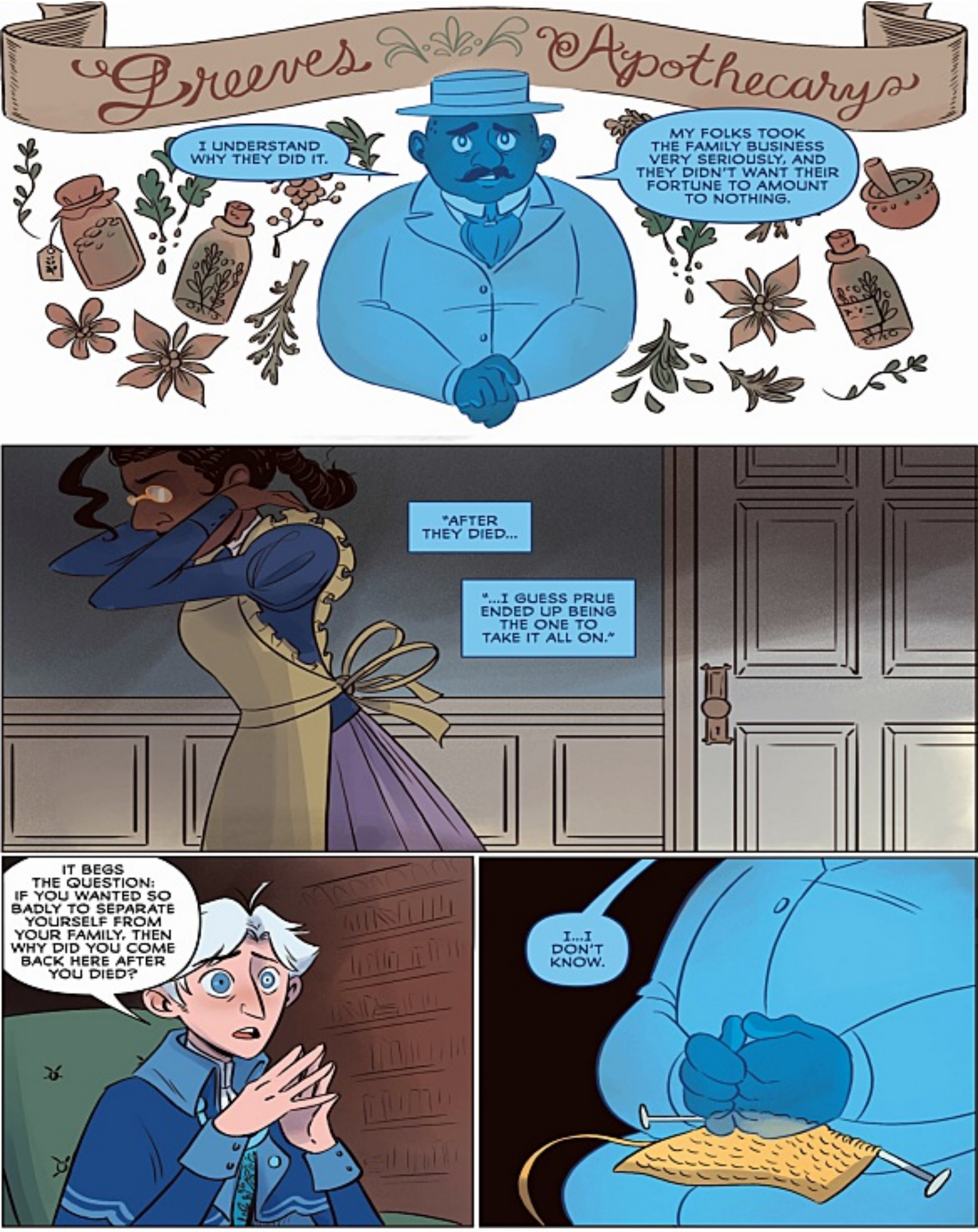
THOSE ARE THE WINSTONS. THEY WERE MUCKING ABOUT IN THE GARDEN, SO I INVITED THEM IN.

THIS IS OWEN. NOT THE MOST COHERENT FELLOW, BUT COMPANY IS COMPANY, I ALWAYS SAY.


AND THIS IS MUFFIN.

BAP!
THNK!


SHALL WE START WITH YOU?
H-HOLD ON! YOU DON'T INTEND TO EXORCISE ME... DO YOU?
I WOULD NEVER DO THAT TO YOU, GAVIN. I'D LIKE TO GET TO KNOW YOU.
LET'S START WITH THE BASICS. WHO YOU WERE WHEN YOU WERE ALIVE, HOW LONG YOU'VE LIVED HERE, WHAT YOU'VE BEEN UP TO LATELY... THINGS LIKE THAT.
I LIKED TO KNIT THINGS WHEN I WAS ALIVE...LIKE THIS SCARF.
I ALSO SEWED CLOTHES AND WROTE STORIES. BUT NOW...WELL, I MOSTLY JUST KNIT. BEING A GHOST GETS A BIT BORING, AS YOU CAN IMAGINE.
STOPPED WRITING, THOUGH. NOT MUCH USE FOR IT ANYMORE.
Harriet Lee
Gavin Greene
BUT I DON'T ACTUALLY LIVE HERE. I LEFT HOME A LONG TIME AGO...
"SEE, I GOT A JOB AS A SEAMSTER IN ABERFIELD. MY PARENTS EXPECTED ME TO TAKE ON THE APOTHECARY BUSINESS INSTEAD. THEY WOULD NOT TOLERATE THEIR OLDEST SON WORKING A PROFESSION MEANT FOR SERVANTS AND MAIDS. THEY SAID I WAS BEING SELFISH.
"AND MAYBE I WAS. BUT IT'S WHAT I WANTED TO DO, SO... I LEFT HOME AND NEVER CAME BACK. THE JOB WAS SIMPLE. NO CHEMICALS, NO BACKDOOR DEALINGS WITH UNSAVORY FOLKS...JUST A QUIET ROOM, FULL OF CLOTHES TO SEW. THEN I WOULD GO BACK TO MY FLAT AND WRITE IN THE EVENINGS.
"ALL IT COST WAS MY FAMILY...THEY WROTE ME OUT OF THE WILL."


Greeves Apothecary
I UNDERSTAND WHY THEY DID IT.
MY FOLKS TOOK THE FAMILY BUSINESS VERY SERIOUSLY, AND THEY DIDN'T WANT THEIR FORTUNE TO AMOUNT TO NOTHING.
*AFTER THEY DIED...
"...I GUESS PRUE ENDED UP BEING THE ONE TO TAKE IT ALL ON."
IT BEGS THE QUESTION: IF YOU WANTED SO BADLY TO SEPARATE YOURSELF FROM YOUR FAMILY, THEN WHY DID YOU COME BACK HERE AFTER YOU DIED?
I...I DON'T KNOW.

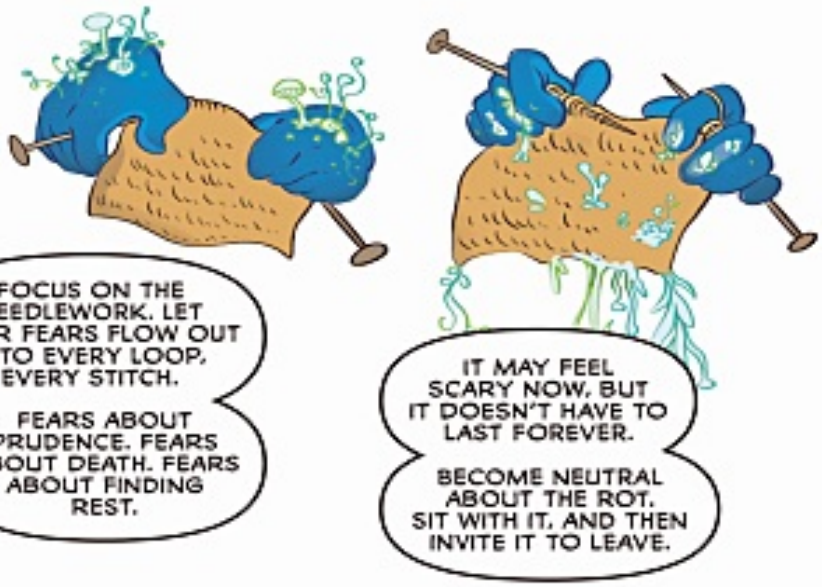
"IT WAS ALL SO...RANDOM, YOU KNOW? ONE MOMENT, I'M IN A CARRIAGE HEADED TO WORK, THE NEXT...BAM! HEART GIVES OUT, AND I'M A GHOST, WANDERING IN LIMBO. I DIDN'T MEAN TO WAKE BACK UP IN THE LAND OF THE LIVING, MIND YOU. SOME LITTLE ITCH KEPT PULLING ME BACK TO THIS OLD HOUSE–BACK TO PRUDENCE.
"I WAS AFRAID MAYBE SOMETHING BAD WOULD HAPPEN TO HER, BUT...
"I'VE BEEN HERE A FEW YEARS NOW, AND SHE SEEMS TO GET ON JUST FINE. IF ANYTHING, I'M STRESSING HER OUT BY BEING HERE."
"IT SEEMS YOU'RE QUITE INVESTED IN WATCHING OVER PRUDENCE. WERE YOU TWO CLOSE?"
OH, NOT ESPECIALLY. WE'RE...VERY DIFFERENT PEOPLE.
"I NEVER KEPT IN TOUCH WITH HER, EVEN AFTER MY FOLKS AND I MADE AMENDS.
"BUT IF I HAD KNOWN HOW LITTLE TIME I HAD LEFT...
"...I WOULD HAVE REACHED OUT TO HER SOONER."
"SO I WOULD LIKE A CHANCE TO EXPLAIN MYSELF, APOLOGIZE, MAYBE EVEN MAKE UP FOR LOST TIME.
"BUT WE'RE HAVING TROUBLE... COMMUNICATING."
WHY NOT WRITE HER A LETTER? YOU ALREADY ENJOY WRITING, AND THAT WAY YOU CAN GET ALL YOUR FEELINGS DOWN UNINTERRUPTED.
I TRIED THAT, BUT SHE WROTE OVER ALL MY WORDS, LIKE THE PAGE WAS COMPLETELY EMPTY.

AH. SHE HASN'T GIVEN YOU PERMISSION, THEN.
P-PERMISSION?
GHOSTS CAN'T COMMUNICATE WITH—OR EVEN TOUCH—THE LIVING WITHOUT THEIR PERMISSION.
I WAS PEN FRIENDS WITH A GHOST WHEN I WAS YOUNG. SHE LEFT ME LETTERS THAT LOOKED LIKE BLANK PAGES, BUT WHEN I AGREED TO COMMUNICATE WITH HER, THE WORDS APPEARED ON THE PAGE LIKE THEY WERE MADE OF INVISIBLE INK!
...hat I'm here will you have a tea party with me? ♡
Circle One:
Yes Yes please!
Love, Brynn ♡
IN THAT CASE, I NEED YOUR HELP, DORIAN.
I NEED TO TALK TO MY SISTER, AND I DON'T THINK I'LL BE ABLE TO REST UNTIL I DO.
CAN YOU GET PERMISSION FOR ME?
I COULD TRY! GO AHEAD AND WRITE YOUR LETTER, AND I'LL DELIVER IT ON YOUR BEHALF.
...BUT WHAT IF SHE HATES IT?
WHAT IF I BARE MY SOUL TO HER IN LETTERS, AND SHE HATES IT?
WHAT IF SHE TRIES TO EXORCISE ME AGAIN??
I'M A HORRIBLE BROTHER. I DON'T DESERVE ETERNAL REST AFTER ABANDONING HER LIKE THAT!

AND NOW THESE ITCHY FLOWERS ARE BACK–
STEADY, GAVIN! THAT ROT WILL GROW AS LONG AS IT HAS FEAR AND REGRET TO FEED ON. DON'T FEED IT.
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO STOP! H-HELP ME!

IT'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT. IT'S...EHM, LET ME THINK...

AH, HERE! USE THIS.


FOCUS ON THE NEEDLEWORK. LET YOUR FEARS FLOW OUT INTO EVERY LOOP, EVERY STITCH.
FEARS ABOUT PRUDENCE. FEARS ABOUT DEATH. FEARS ABOUT FINDING REST.
IT MAY FEEL SCARY NOW, BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE TO LAST FOREVER.
BECOME NEUTRAL ABOUT THE ROT. SIT WITH IT, AND THEN INVITE IT TO LEAVE.

THE MORE YOU DETACH YOURSELF FROM YOUR FEARS AND YOUR REGRETS...
THE EASIER IT IS TO LET THEM GO.
HOW DO YOU FEEL NOW?
B-BETTER. THANK YOU.
BUT WHAT HAPPENS IF MY LETTER DOESN'T WORK?
WHAT IF I GIVE IT MY BEST SHOT, AND IT STILL FAILS?
WILL I BE...
TRAPPED HERE?

AS LONG AS WHAT YOU WRITE IS SINCERE, I KNOW SHE'S GOING TO LOVE IT.
THANKS, DORIAN! YOU SAVED MY LIFE! METAPHORICALLY, OF COURSE!
I'LL WRITE THAT LETTER, AND FINISH THIS SCARF TO GIVE TO PRUDENCE AS A PEACE OFFERING!
A SPLENDID IDEA!
NOW THEN, WHO'S NEXT?
HRRNNNNGGH...
HRRNNNNNGGH
UM. H-HI. SHALL WE... S-START WITH YOUR...CHILD-HOOD?
IT ALL STARTED WHEN I WAS A YOUNG LAD, IN THE GARDENS OF MY COTTAGE HOME IN GLASDEN, WHERE MET MY BONNIE LASS VICTORIA BLAH BLA LAH BLAH BLAH BETROTHED UNDER THE FUL OON BLAH BLAH BLAH BLAH SET SAIL ABOAR Y FATHER'S SHIP BLAH BLAH BLAH HEARTAC ND TRAGEDY AND BETRAYAL BLAH BLA BLAH, AND THUS BEGINS THE TALE OF MY WOE

I'VE TRIED EVERYTHING.
SALT, ROSEMARY, GARLIC, SAGE...
EVERY NIGHTSHADE UNDER THE SUN.
Fragile

EVERY HERB, FROM EVERY RIDICULOUS OLD WIVES' TALE, I'VE MADE INTO A TINCTURE.
CRUNCH, CRUNCH
EXORCISTS FUMIGATED THE MANOR WITH HEXOCRINE LAST YEAR, AND THEY CLAIMED THAT IT CLEARED OUT THE GHOST, BUT IT ALSO PUTREFIED MY MEDICINES AND FILLED THE GREENHOUSE WITH TOXIC FUMES!
DO YOU KNOW HOW LONG IT TAKES TO CLEAN HEXOCRINE RESIDUE OUT OF FURNITURE?!
AND THIS GHOST, THIS ABERRATION OF SCIENCE AND NATURE, KEPT. COMING. BACK!
THE BLASTED THING HAS DRIVEN ME TO MY WIT'S END!
ROLL, ROLL, ROLL
SHNK!
AND YOU HONESTLY EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE...
...YOU EXORCISED THE GHOST, SIMPLY BY TALKING TO IT?

S-SORT OF. BUT I DON'T EXORCISE THEM. I DO THERAPY WITH THEM.
...THERAPY. WITH THE GHOSTS.
IT TURNS OUT, FOUR OF THE GHOSTS WOULD HAVE HAPPILY LEFT YOUR HOME AT ANY TIME. BUT YOUR SALT BARRIER TRAPPED THEM IN THE STUDY.
...OH.
I'M SORRY. HOW MANY WERE THERE?
FIVE. IF YOU COUNT THE CAT.
EUGH. REVOLTING. BUT YOU TOOK CARE OF THEM. DID YOU?
YES! THE GHOSTS ARE ALL TAKEN CARE OF!
SO MY ORIGINAL THEORY WAS CORRECT: TABLE SALT IS A NATURAL DETERRENT FOR GHOSTS.

INCIDENTALLY, SO IS LAVENDER.
I'M QUITE IMPRESSED YOU MANAGED TO TRAP ANY GHOSTS IN YOUR STUDY WITHOUT BEING ABLE TO SEE THEM.
I COULD HAVE FIGURED IT OUT MYSELF WITH MORE RESEARCH, I'M SURE. IT'S JUST THAT...
WELL, EVERYTHING ELSE ABOUT THE HUMAN BODY CAN BE CUT UP AND STUDIED, BUT I CAN'T SIMPLY POUR SOMEONE'S GHOST INTO A BEAKER, NOW, CAN I?
THEY'RE UNNATURAL. UNSCIENTIFIC.
CREEPY.

THAT ASIDE, I MUST ADMIT IT'S NICE TO HAVE THE HELP OF SOMEONE WHO CAN SEE THE GHOSTS, FOR ONCE. THE EXORCISTS CERTAINLY COULDN'T.
WHILE I HAVE YOU HERE...

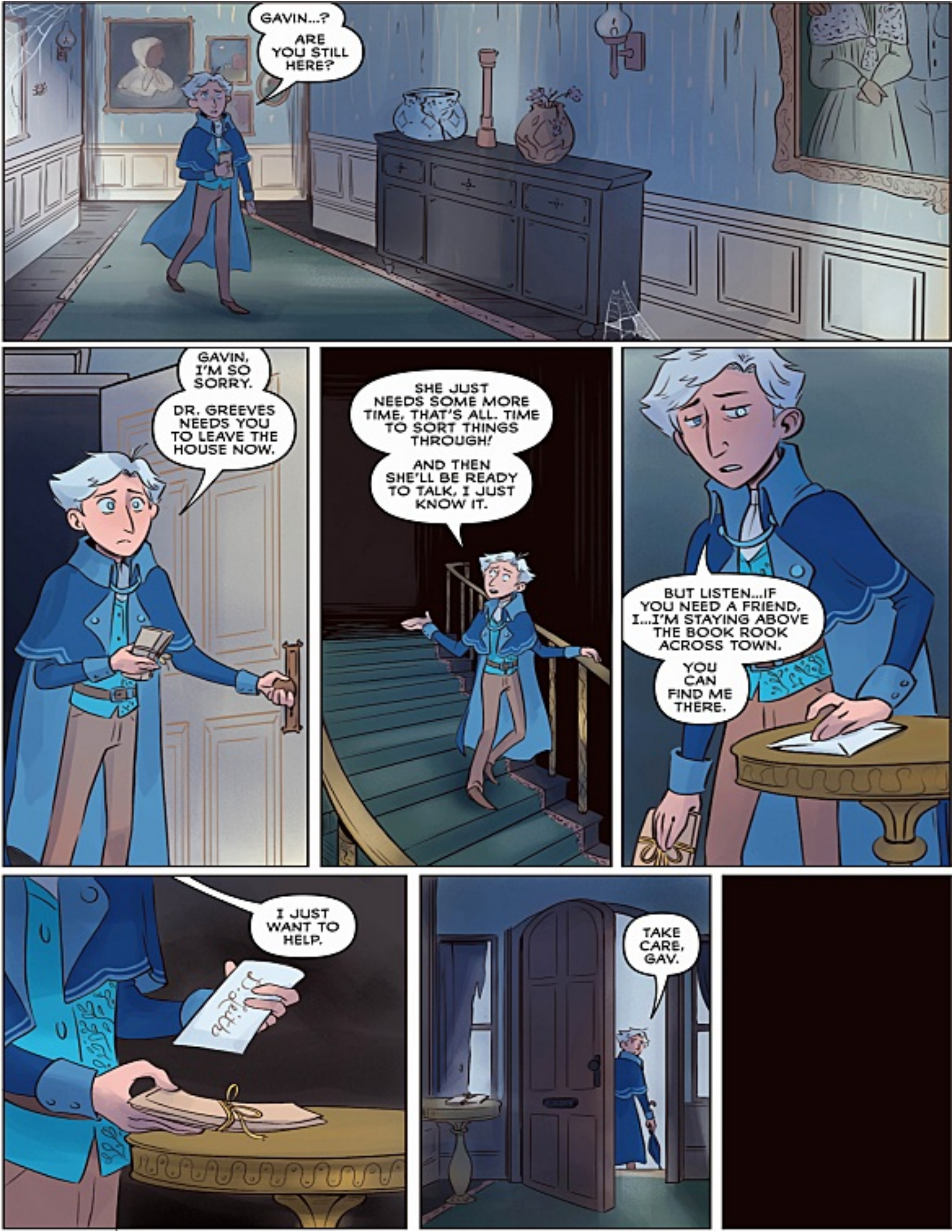
...MR. LEITH, COULD I DISSECT YOUR BRAIN FOR A MOMENT?

...PLEASE TELL ME YOU MEANT "PICK MY BRAIN."
YES, THAT. SORRY, I HAVE NOT SOCIALIZED IN A WHILE.

I'D LIKE TO KNOW WHAT OTHER MATERIALS KEEP GHOSTS AWAY.
LET'S SEE... SALT AND SAGE, CERTAINLY. BLUE MINT. LAVENDER.
BLACKTHORN, OF THE STOUT VARIETY.
OH, AND I HAD A CLIENT WHO WAS ALLERGIC TO WITCH HAZEL. SO BE CAREFUL WITH THAT ONE. DON'T WANT TO HARM THE GHOSTS, AFTER ALL.
YOU CERTAINLY KNOW YOUR HERBS AND FLOWERS, HM?
I VISIT A LOT OF GRAVES.
BY THE WAY, DOCTOR, I NEED TO TELL YOU...
ONE OF THE GHOSTS DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE JUST YET.
IT'S THE GHOST OF YOUR BROTHER, GAVIN.
HE'D QUITE LIKE A CHANCE TO TALK TO YOU, ACTUALLY.
HE WROTE THIS LETTER FOR YOU TODAY...
WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO READ IT?
IS THIS... SOME KIND OF JOKE?

YOU TOLD ME YOUR METHOD WAS SAFER AND MORE EFFECTIVE THAN CHEMICAL EXORCISM.
YOU **TOLD** ME I WOULD NEVER NEED TO USE HEXOCRINE AGAIN.
AND NOW NOT ONLY IS THE GHOST STILL **HERE**...
...BUT YOU'RE GIVING ME A LIST OF ITS **DEMANDS**?!
OH.
UH.
I, UM, I KNOW HOW THIS SOUNDS...
BUT GAVIN NEEDS YOU TO GIVE PERMISSION IN ORDER TO READ HIS LETTER! HE WANTS TO RECONCILE!
YOU KNOW WHAT? **FINE**.
LET'S PRETEND IT REALLY IS THE GHOST OF MY CAPRICIOUS BROTHER YOU TALKED TO.
IT'S BEEN TWENTY YEARS! HOW **DARE** HE ONLY CARE TO REACH OUT AFTER HE'S ALREADY IN THE GRAVE?!
HE **HAD** HIS CHANCE TO RECONCILE, AND WASTED IT! BUT I'M EXPECTED TO PLACATE **HIM**, WHILE HE WREAKS HAVOC ON MY HOUSE?
HOW IS THAT FAIR?!
CRUNCH, CRUNCH!
BUT NOW YOU KNOW **WHY** HE WREAKS HAVOC ON YOUR HOUSE! ISN'T THAT MUCH BETTER THAN COMBINING SALT WITH...EHM–
WELL, I DON'T RIGHTLY KNOW WHAT'S **IN** THE HEXOCRINE FORMULA. ARSENIC? STRYCHNINE, PERHAPS?
HOW SHOULD I KNOW?? I DON'T **MAKE** THE HEXOCRINE. I JUST SELL SUPPLIES TO THE–
WAIT, **WHY** ARE YOU SIDING WITH **THE GHOST**?!
I-I'M SORRY! YOU HAVE EVERY RIGHT TO BE UPSET, DOCTOR.
BUT THIS IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO GET SOME CLOSURE.
DON'T YOU WANT TO KNOW THE THINGS YOUR BROTHER NEVER GOT THE CHANCE TO SAY TO YOU?

THAT IS NOT YOUR BUSINESS, MR. LEITH.
I HIRED YOU TO MAKE THE GHOSTS LEAVE, NOT TELL ME TO INDULGE THEIR FLIGHTS OF FANCY.
I WON'T USE HEXOCRINE. BUT I WANT THAT GHOST GONE. UNDERSTAND?
IF YOU CAN'T DO YOUR JOB AS PROMISED...
I WILL HAVE TO CALL IN A REAL EXORCIST.
NO!
NO, NO! I'LL GET HIM TO LEAVE.
PLEASE DON'T CALL AN EXORCIST.
THE HERBS I TOLD YOU ABOUT WILL BE ENOUGH.
ALL RIGHT... GOOD.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE, MR. LEITH. YOU MAY LEAVE NOW.
YOUR CHEQUE IS ON THE TABLE NEXT TO THE FRONT DOOR.
M-MAYBE I COULD COME BACK? YOU KNOW, FOR A FOLLOW-UP. IN CASE HE DOESN'T–
I SAID, YOU MAY LEAVE.
OF COURSE.
HAPPY TO HELP.


GAVIN...?
ARE YOU STILL HERE?
GAVIN, I'M SO SORRY.
DR. GREEVES NEEDS YOU TO LEAVE THE HOUSE NOW.
SHE JUST NEEDS SOME MORE TIME, THAT'S ALL. TIME TO SORT THINGS THROUGH!
AND THEN SHE'LL BE READY TO TALK, I JUST KNOW IT.
BUT LISTEN...IF YOU NEED A FRIEND, I...I'M STAYING ABOVE THE BOOK ROOK ACROSS TOWN.
YOU CAN FIND ME THERE.
I JUST WANT TO HELP.
TAKE CARE, GAV.

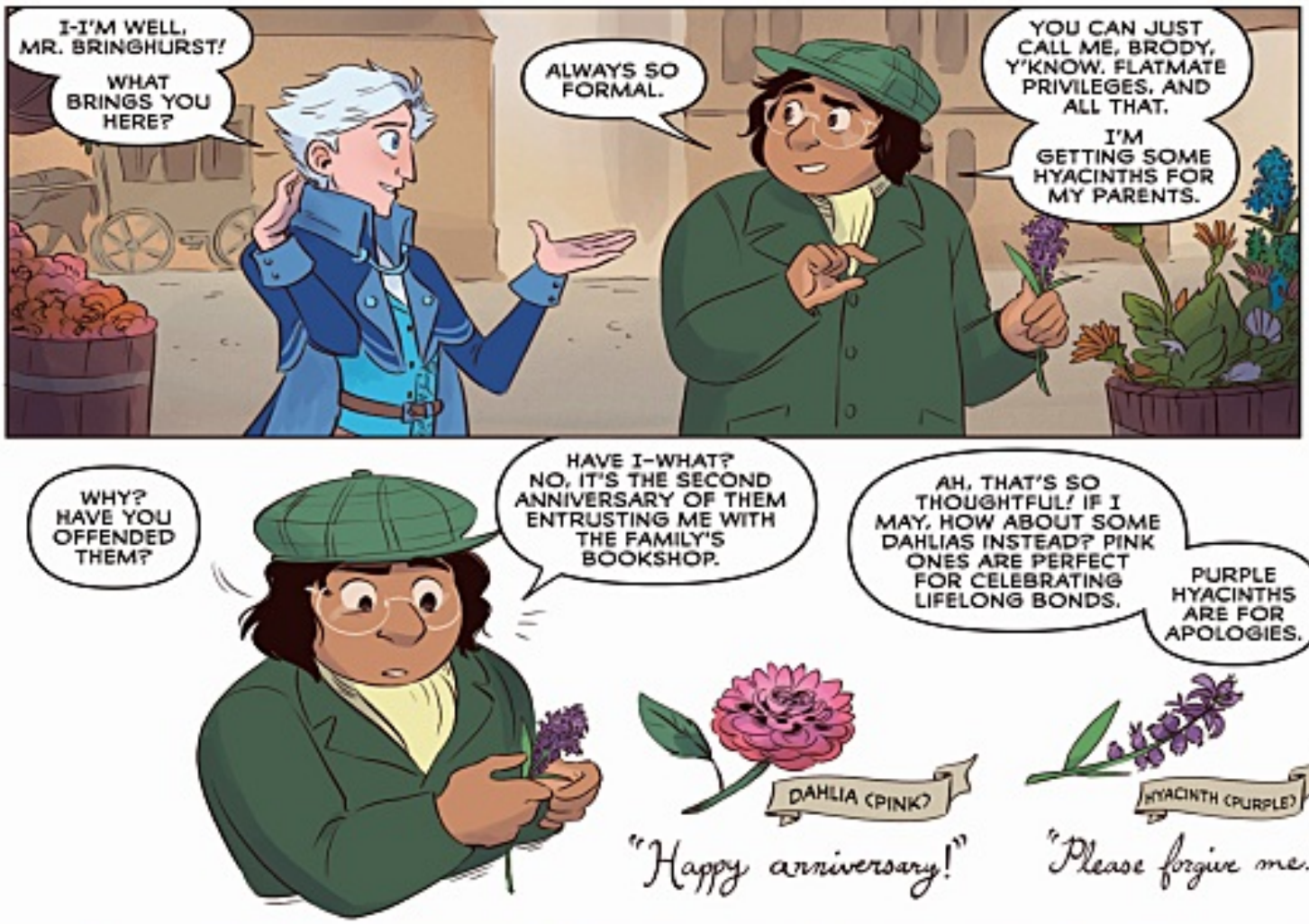
NOW CLOSE YOUR EYES...
NOTICE THE BREEZE RUSTLING THROUGH THE TREES. FOCUS ON THAT SOUND, AND FOLLOW IT TO THE BANKS OF A RIVER. A DARK, QUIET RIVER...WARM, GENTLE, AND GLISTENING WITH STARS.
NOW IMAGINE YOURSELF FLOATING DOWN THE RIVER... SWIRLING EDDIES OF STARLIGHT BEARING YOUR FEARS AWAY, AND YOUR SOUL DOWN INTO THE SOFT NIGHT OF LIMBO.
NOTICE THE COMFORTING EMBRACE OF THE WATER, WHICH MAKES YOU FEEL THAT EVERYTHING WILL BE ALL RIGHT.
CARRY THAT FEELING IN YOUR HEART WITH YOU, AND WADE THROUGH THE WATERS, UNTIL YOU REACH A DOOR MADE OF STONE.
SEEK OUT DEATH'S DOOR, AND ENTER INSIDE...
FOR THE NEW LIFE THAT AWAITS YOU.

LOOK AT YOU, DORIE! FOUR GHOSTS PACIFIED, IN ONE SESSION? I CALL THAT A ROUSING SUCCESS!
YES, WELL... MOSTLY A SUCCESS.
THERE WAS A FIFTH GHOST: DR. GREEVES'S BROTHER, GAVIN. HE WANTED TO RECONCILE, BUT SHE WASN'T INTERESTED. I'M WORRIED THAT IT WILL PREVENT HIM FROM FINDING REST.
WELL, DID HE HAVE ANY ROT GROWING ON HIM?
A BIT. BUT WE TOOK CARE OF IT–
MORNING.
MORNING.
GOOD MORNING.
THEN HE'LL BE FINE, DORIE. NO ROT MEANS HE CAN STILL SLEEP, AND SLEEPING MEANS HE'LL ENTER LIMBO.
GOOD MORNING, MR. GRAVEKEEPER!
CHUNK, CHUNK!
RACHEL WIGHT
ELIZA ROWE
E. e T. PIELSTICK SMITH
RIGHT... GOOD CHAT.
OH, IGNORE THAT OLD NUMPTY.

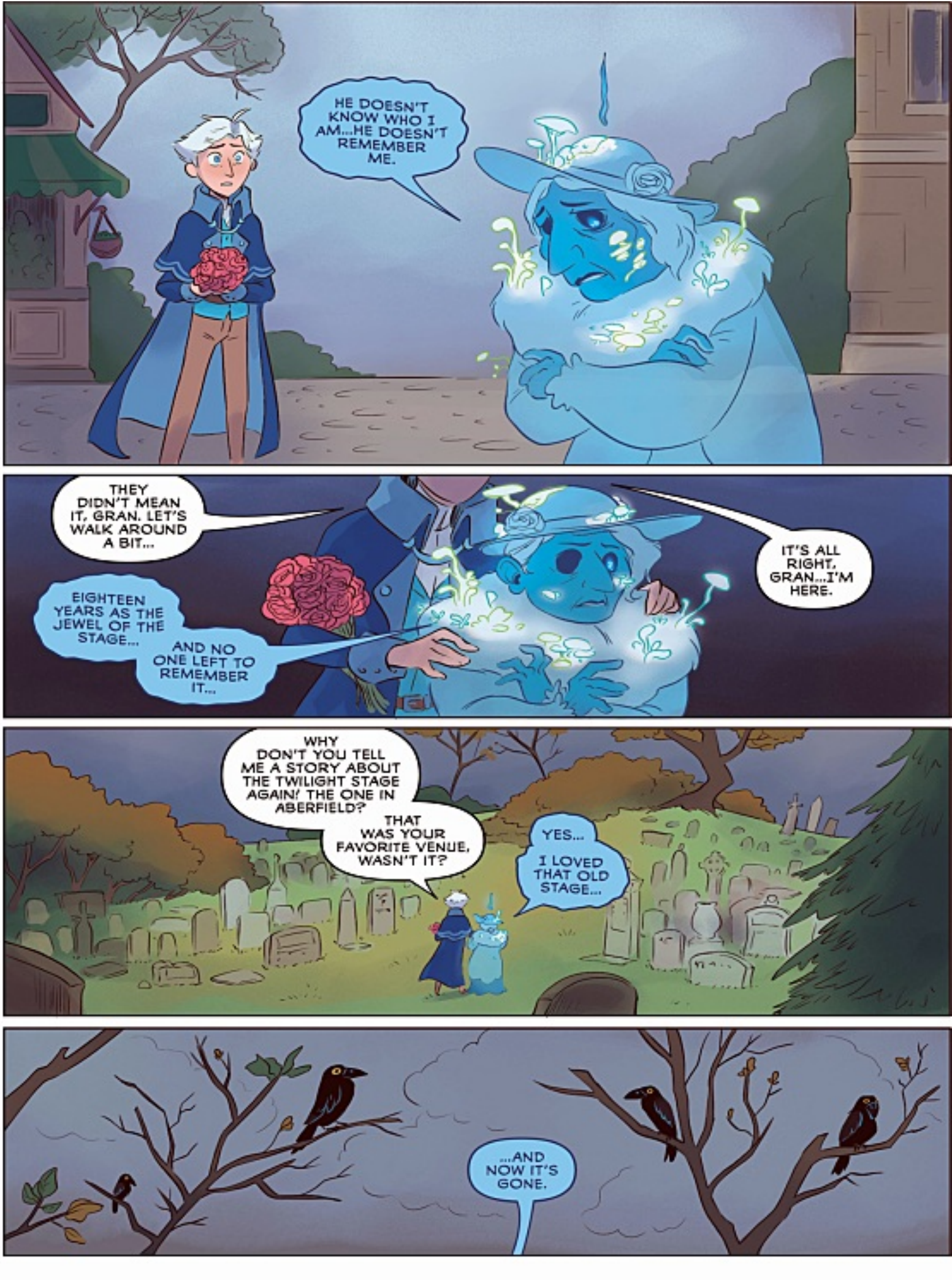
I CAN'T HELP BUT FEEL LIKE THERE WAS MORE I COULD HAVE DONE TO CONVINCE HER TO GIVE HIM A CHANCE.
WELL, IF I WERE IN YOUR LOAFERS, I WOULD HAVE MADE A BIG TO-DO, AND SHOWN THAT PRUDENCE GREEVES A REAL HAUNTING.
SCARY MUSIC! FLICKERING FIRELIGHT! BOOKS FLYING EVERYWHERE!
AND THE ONLY WAY TO PUT A STOP TO THE MAYHEM WOULD BE FOR HER TO WATCH AS HER BROTHER'S SORDID TALE IS WRITTEN UPON THE WALLS OF HER VERY HOUSE, IN BLOOD!
AND THEN THEY RECONCILE THEIR DIFFERENCES...
SHE PAYS YOU DOUBLE FOR RIDDING HER OF A GHOSTLY MENACE...
ET CETERA.
WHY DO YOU KEEP SUGGESTING I SCARE PEOPLE INTO SUBMISSION?
BECAUSE IT WOULD WORK, DEAR.
ROOKWOOD

SHE HAD A CHANCE TO GET SOME CLOSURE WITH HER BROTHER, AND SHE DIDN'T TAKE IT.
HE WANTED TO TALK TO HER SO BADLY, AND SHE JUST... REFUSED.
I WISH SHE KNEW HOW LUCKY SHE WAS TO HAVE THIS CHANCE AT ALL.
THE FIRST TWO YEARS OF STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS ARE ALWAYS THE HARDEST, DEAR.
BUT FOUR OUT OF FIVE GHOSTS PUT TO REST IS RESPECTABLE! YOU HAVEN'T FAILED. SOME GHOSTS JUST NEED MORE TIME AND SESSIONS TO MOVE ON THAN OTHERS.
LIVING PEOPLE ARE NO DIFFERENT.
BUT THE LIVING DON'T HAUNT EACH OTHER'S HOUSES OVER IT.
OH, THEY DO PLENTY OF THAT, IN THEIR OWN WAY.
ALIVE OR DEAD, HEALING TAKES PATIENCE.
GIVE THEM TIME. THOSE GREEVES KIDS WILL BE FINE.
YOU'RE RIGHT. THANKS, GRAN.
OF COURSE I'M RIGHT. GRAN ALWAYS KNOWS BEST!

A DOZEN CARNATIONS, PLEASE. PINK.
FLORIST
AGAIN, EH? GOT A LADYLOVE WHO FANCIES 'EM?
OH NO, I'VE NOT HAD ONE OF THOSE IN A LONG...
...TIME...
WELL? GO AND SAY HELLO!
OH, NO, I SHOULDN'T BOTHER HIM–
HIYA, DORIAN!
I THOUGHT THAT WAS YOU. HOW'S IT GOING, PAL?

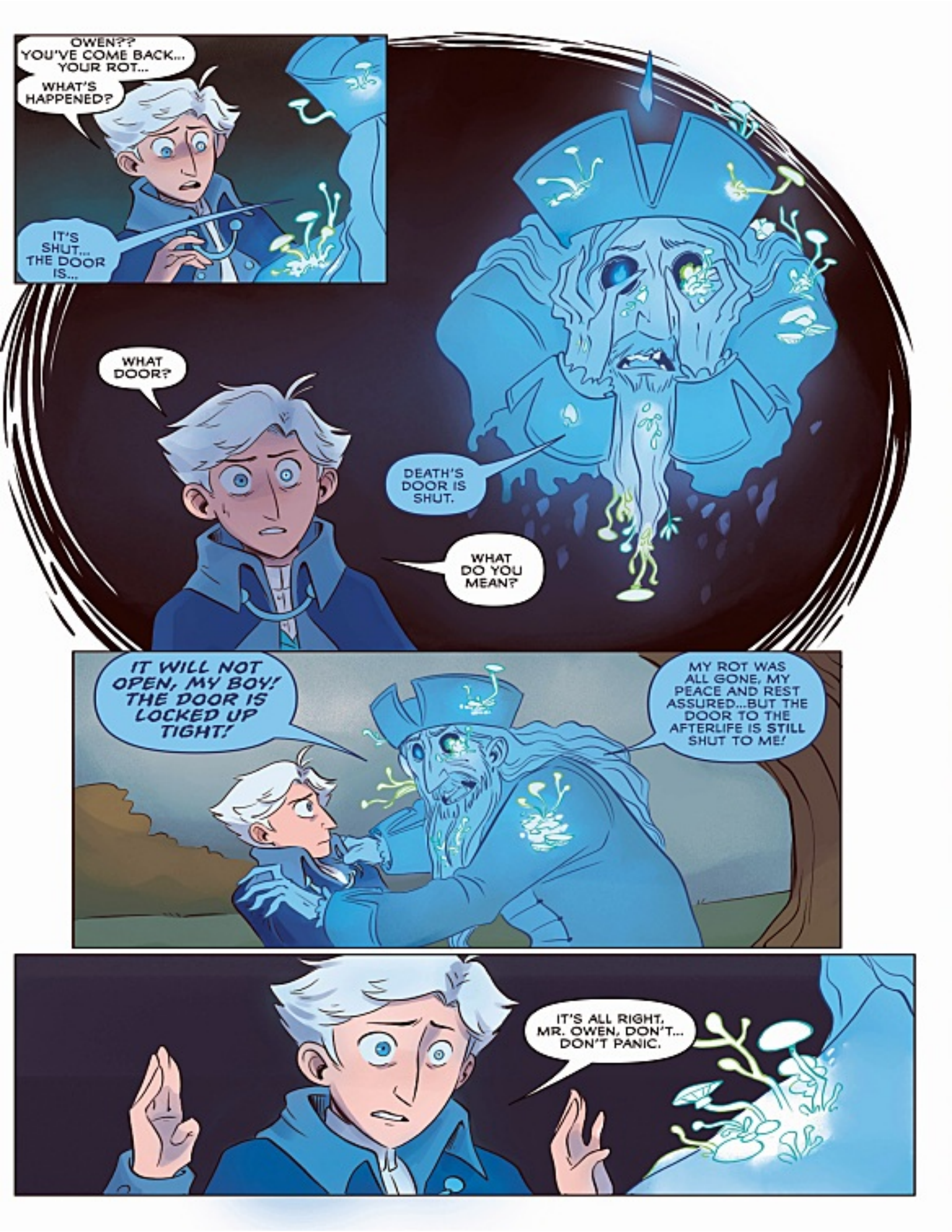

I-I'M WELL, MR. BRINGHURST!
WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE?
ALWAYS SO FORMAL.
YOU CAN JUST CALL ME, BRODY, Y'KNOW. FLATMATE PRIVILEGES, AND ALL THAT.
I'M GETTING SOME HYACINTHS FOR MY PARENTS.
WHY? HAVE YOU OFFENDED THEM?
HAVE I-WHAT? NO, IT'S THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF THEM ENTRUSTING ME WITH THE FAMILY'S BOOKSHOP.
AH, THAT'S SO THOUGHTFUL! IF I MAY, HOW ABOUT SOME DAHLIAS INSTEAD? PINK ONES ARE PERFECT FOR CELEBRATING LIFELONG BONDS.
PURPLE HYACINTHS ARE FOR APOLOGIES.
DAHLIA (PINK)
"Happy anniversary!"
HYACINTH (PURPLE)
"Please forgive me."
I HAD NO IDEA. THAT'S BRILLIANT, THANK YOU!
YOU'RE A MEDIUM AND A BOTANIST?
OH, NO, I ONLY GREW UP AROUND FLOWERS. MY PARENTS ARE FLORISTS, YOU SEE.
I JUST LIKE HOW FLOWERS SAY A LOT ABOUT THE FEELINGS OF BOTH THE GIVER AND THE RECEIVER. SORT OF LIKE A SECRET LANGUAGE.
AS A MATTER OF FACT, I-
TELL HIM YOU'RE A GHOST THERAPIST, NOT A BLOODY MEDIUM.
TELL HIM, DORIE!
T-THANK YOU, GRAN, YES, EHM-
THANK WHO?
M-MY GRAN. THAT IS, I'M...GETTING CARNATIONS. FOR MY GRAN. THAT'S W-WHY I'M HERE.

YOU MIGHT KNOW OF HER. LAZARUS LEITH, THE STAGE MAGICIAN.
NEVER HEARD OF HER.
BUT TELL YOUR GRAN TO BREAK A LEG, ALL THE SAME.
THANK YOU, I WILL.
WAIT, ISN'T THAT...
THE GHOST-EYED MAN?
THAT'S HIM, ALL RIGHT. A BAD OMEN IF I EVER SAW ONE.
THAT SO?
AYE. THEY SAY GHOSTS FOLLOW HIM LIKE MOTHS TO A LAMP.
SOMETHING ABOUT A CURSE.
WELL, THAT'S CREEPY.
AYE, WORD AROUND TOWN IS...
GHOST-EYED MAN?
GHOST-EYED MAN...


HE DOESN'T KNOW WHO I AM...HE DOESN'T REMEMBER ME.
THEY DIDN'T MEAN IT, GRAN. LET'S WALK AROUND A BIT...
EIGHTEEN YEARS AS THE JEWEL OF THE STAGE...
AND NO ONE LEFT TO REMEMBER IT...
IT'S ALL RIGHT, GRAN...I'M HERE.
WHY DON'T YOU TELL ME A STORY ABOUT THE TWILIGHT STAGE AGAIN! THE ONE IN ABERFIELD?
THAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE VENUE, WASN'T IT?
YES... I LOVED THAT OLD STAGE...
...AND NOW IT'S GONE.

SEE? CARNATIONS. YOUR FAVORITE. REMEMBER?
YOUR PERFORMANCES BRIGHTENED THE LIVES OF SO MANY PEOPLE. I WISH I HAD BEEN ALIVE TO SEE THEM.
JESSICA MORGAN AND HER HUSBAND JIM MORGAN
LAVINIA "LAZARUS" LEITH OUR MAGICKAL MUSE
JENNIFER JAMES IN LOVING MEMORY
I WISH YOU HAD, TOO, DEAR BOY.
YOU ARE THE ONLY ONE WHO APPRECIATES WHAT'S LEFT OF ME IN THIS WORLD.
BOB & SUSAN TAYLOR
HADERLIE TANNER AND JAMIE
WELL, I THINK YOU MAY BE THE ONLY ONE WHO APPRECIATES ME, TOO.
THREE MONTHS IN ROOKWOOD, AND I'M ALREADY STARTING TO SCARE PEOPLE OFF.
YOU HAVEN'T SCARED OFF BRODY YET.
NOT YET. LET'S HOPE HE WON'T LISTEN TOO CLOSELY TO ALL THE GOSSIP, BECAUSE HE'S BEEN AN AGREEABLE HOST, AND I QUITE LIKE LIVING AT THE BOOK ROOK.
GOSSIP IS GOSSIP, DEAR. IT'S NOT THE TRUTH.
BUT THERE HAVE BEEN A LOT MORE GHOSTS AROUND ROOKWOOD LATELY, COMPARED TO WHEN I FIRST ARRIVED. WHY IS THAT?
I MEAN, FIVE IN THE SAME HOUSE ISN'T EXACTLY A NORMAL NUMBER OF GHOSTS.
WAS THAT MAN RIGHT ABOUT ME? DID GHOSTS FOLLOW ME TO ROOKWOOD?
OF COURSE NOT, DORIE. MOST TOWNS ARE AT LEAST A WEE BIT HAUNTED.
BESIDES, MORE GHOSTS IS A GOOD THING. THEY'LL KEEP YOU IN BUSINESS.
I CAN ONLY HOPE.

MYEH!
ACH!! M-M-MUFFIN?!
WHY ARE YOU AWAKE AGAIN??
OUR MAGICKAL MUSE
HENRY GLASHEEN
ELEORA GLASHEEN
BETSY NELSON
MEH, MEHH!
IT'S SHUT... IT'S SHUT...


OWEN?? YOU'VE COME BACK... YOUR ROT...
WHAT'S HAPPENED?
IT'S SHUT... THE DOOR IS...
WHAT DOOR?
DEATH'S DOOR IS SHUT.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
IT WILL NOT OPEN, MY BOY! THE DOOR IS LOCKED UP TIGHT!
MY ROT WAS ALL GONE, MY PEACE AND REST ASSURED...BUT THE DOOR TO THE AFTERLIFE IS STILL SHUT TO ME!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, MR. OWEN, DON'T... DON'T PANIC.

I'M TRAPPED.
I WALKED ALL THAT WAY TO THE END OF LIMBO...ALL FOR NOTHING...
WHAT HAVE I DONE TO DESERVE THIS...??
DORIE, WHAT HAS GOTTEN INTO HIM?!
DEATH'S DOOR WON'T OPEN FOR HIM, IT SEEMS. HE NEEDS ANOTHER SESSION.
COME BACK TO THE BOOKSHOP WITH ME, MR. OWEN. JUST STAY...

...CLOSE...

SHRIIIIEEEEEEEKKKK!!
I SEE IT! A GHOST, THERE IN THE WINDOW!
GRACIOUS!
A TRICK OF THE GAS, IF YOU ASK ME.
HORRIBLE.
OUR HOUSE!
WATCH IT!
OY!
DON'T, LAD.
THAT GAS WILL BURN YOUR LUNGS TO CINDERS.
IT'S NOT WORTH YOUR LIFE.

ALLOW ONE WEEK FOR FUMIGATION. THEN YOU'RE SAFE TO RETURN.
RETURN?! WE CAN'T CARRY ON LIVING SOMEPLACE THAT WAS INFECTED BY A GHOST!
YOU, THERE!
DO YOU REALIZE WHAT YOU'VE DONE?!
AH, THE GHOST-EYED MAN HIMSELF.
WE SAVED THIS FINE FAMILY FROM THE VIOLENT APPARITION TERRORIZING THEIR HOME.
IN OTHER WORDS, OUR JOB.
YOU MURDERED THAT GHOST!
DORIAN, WE'VE BEEN OVER THIS. GHOSTS ARE ALREADY DEAD.
PLEASE TELL ME YOU KNOW THAT GHOSTS ARE DEAD.
THAT GHOST WAS MY CLIENT! I WAS DUE TO VISIT THEM THIS EVENING!
TOOK YOUR SWEET TIME, THEN? THAT GHOST WAS NOT GOING TO WAIT FOR YOU.
BUT I-I COULD HAVE TALKED TO THEM!
YOU HONESTLY CARE MORE ABOUT GHOSTS THAN THE PEOPLE WHOSE HOMES WERE INVADED?
LOOK, YOUR GHOST-FRIENDSHIP GIMMICK IS CUTE, BUT SOMEONE COULD HAVE GOTTEN HURT. AND IF YOU INTEND TO CRY MURDER EVERY TIME WE CLEANSE A HOUSE OF EVIL SPIRITS...
ERGH!
...THEN PERHAPS I SHOULD SEND WORD TO OLD MILL ABOUT THIS?

NO NEED.
I...I WON'T TROUBLE YOU ANYMORE.
GOOD CHOICE.
OFF YOU GO, YOUNG MAN.
HOW DOES HE KNOW ABOUT OLD MILL??
DORIE, ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO LET HIM TALK TO YOU THAT WAY?!
OWEN, GO BACK TO THE CEMETERY. IT'S SAFER THERE. I'LL COME FIND YOU IN THE MORNING.
BUT-
I'M LATE FOR MY NEXT APPOINTMENT.

THE
BOOK ROOK

THE
BOOK ROOK
PHEW...

HOLD STEADY
I'M HOME.
PPRRRBH?
HELLO, SHADOW.
MAGICAL LAZARUS
LIVE AT THE TWILIGHT THEATRE
EVENING, DORIAN.
GOOD EVENING, BRODY.
HOW WAS WORK?
GREAT! WONDERFUL.
A-ANOTHER GOOD, SUCCESSFUL DAY OF GHOST THERAPY.
INDEED.

AH, THAT'S... GOOD?
TINK!
ROUGH DAY OUT THERE?

OH, IT'S JUST... I HAD A...
BIT OF A ROW WITH THE EXORCISTS.
THOSE BLACKBEAKS ARE STILL GIVING YOU GRIEF? DON'T YOU BOTH WORK WITH GHOSTS?
I WORK WITH GHOSTS. THEY DESTROY THEM.
THE CAMPBELLS HAD THEIR COTTAGE GASSED WITH HEXOCRINE. JUST... STOOD BY WHILE THE EXORCISTS INCINERATED THE GHOST.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY PEOPLE CAN'T JUST COEXIST WITH THEM.
IT'S HARD TO COEXIST WITH SOMETHING YOU CAN'T SEE.
I CAN HARDLY KEEP TRACK OF YOUR GRAN MOST DAYS.
SHE HASN'T BEEN A BOTHER TO YOU, HAS SHE??
I-IF SHE HAS, I CAN ASK HER TO-
NO, NO! FOR A GHOST, SHE'S RATHER PLEASANT.
OH...I'M GLAD.
SOMETIMES... I FEAR MY WORK IS MORE OF AN IMPOSITION THAN A HELP.
THE PEOPLE OF ROOKWOOD REALLY HATE GHOSTS.
CAN'T BLAME THEM, THOUGH.
GHOSTS REMIND PEOPLE OF GRIEF...
OF THE ABSENCE OF THEIR LOVED ONES.
BUT PEOPLE CAN'T GRIEVE FOREVER.
HOW DOES ONE MOURN THEIR DEAD AND MOVE PAST THEIR LOSS, IF THEIR DEAD NEVER LEAVE?

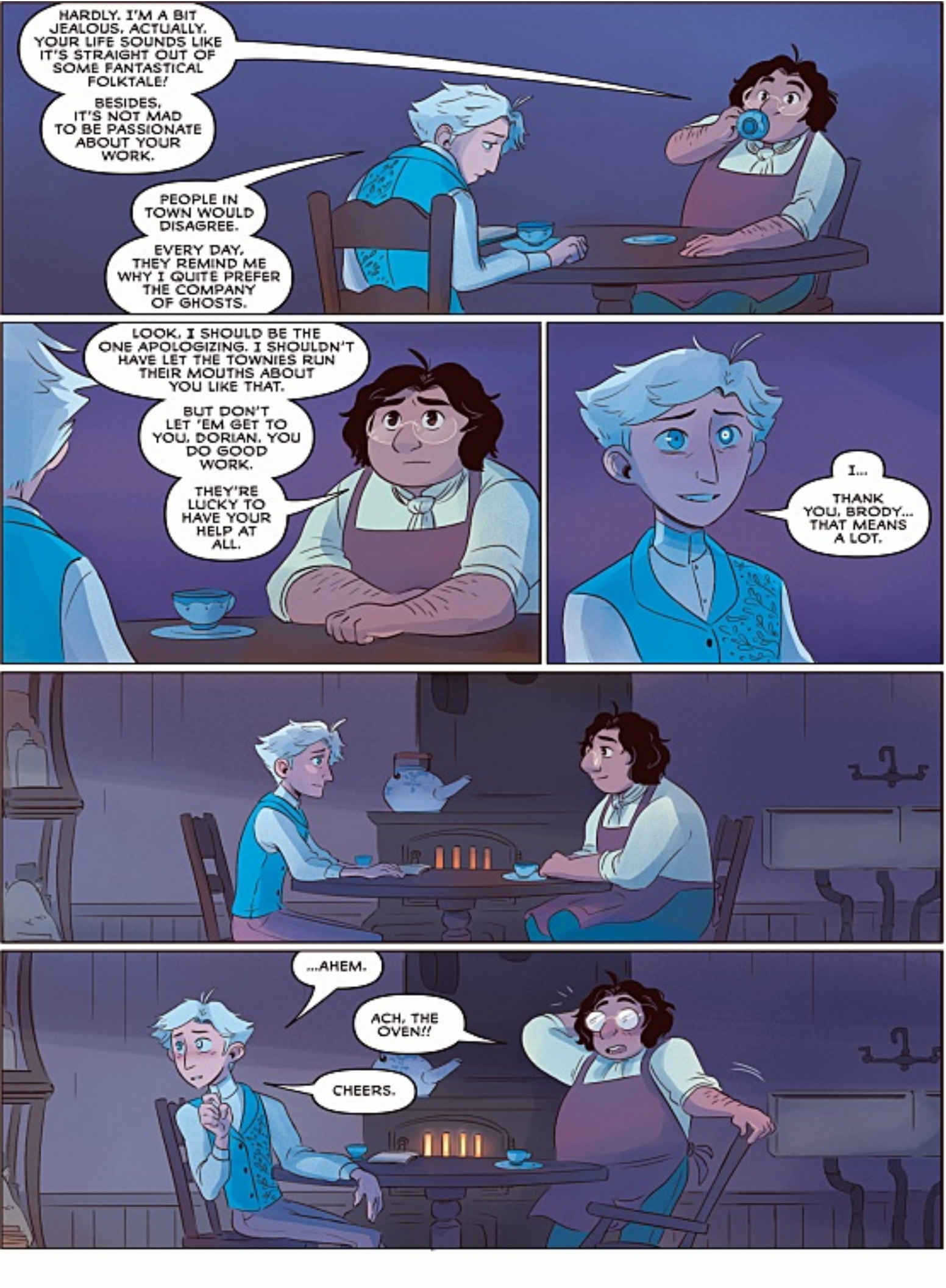
"BUT SOMETIMES THE DEAD CAN'T LEAVE YET.
*MANY OF THEM ARE JUST AS AGGRIEVED AS THE LIVING, AND THAT KEEPS THEM FROM FINDING REST. THEY'RE STILL PEOPLE, AFTER ALL.
*THEY JUST...NEED A NUDGE TOWARD LIMBO FROM TIME TO TIME."
"THE SLEEPING PLACE, RIGHT? *REST IN PEACE?*"
"GOOD MEMORY. YES, GHOSTS ENTER LIMBO BY FALLING ASLEEP, BUT THEY ACTUALLY HAVE TO WALK THROUGH IT TO REACH DEATH'S DOOR."

THAT'S HOW IT'S SUPPOSED TO GO, ANYWAY.

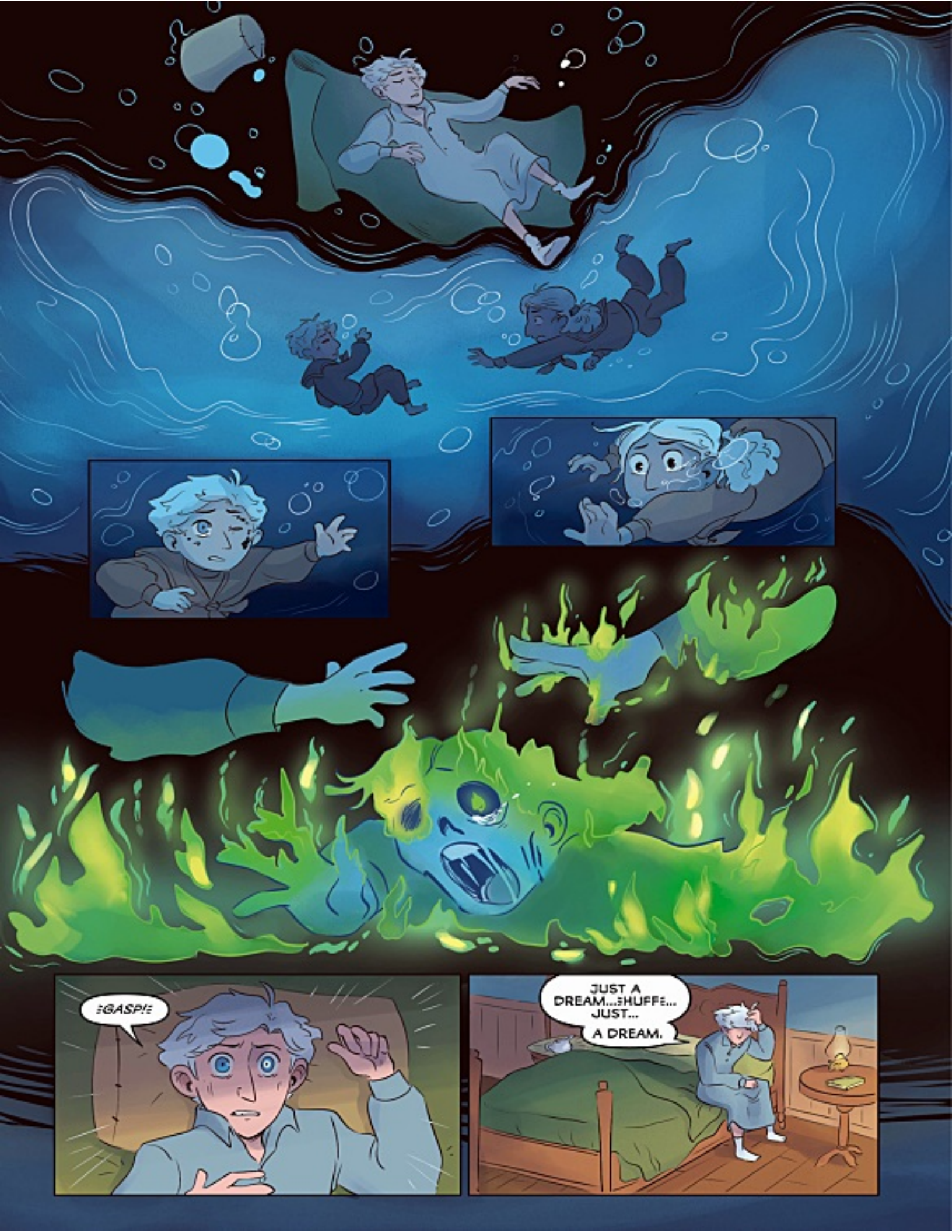
LOOK, I'M SORRY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED AT THE FLORIST TODAY...
I-I DIDN'T MEAN TO EMBARRASS YOU, OR CAUSE TROUBLE FOR ANYONE.
I JUST WANT TO PROTECT THE GHOSTS.
TO WALK THEM THROUGH WHAT TRAPS THEM HERE, AND CURE THEIR ROT SO THEY CAN FIND PEACE IN THEIR NEW EXISTENCE.

IT'S HARD ENOUGH GOING THROUGH LIFE WITHOUT HELP...
NO ONE SHOULD HAVE TO GO THROUGH DEATH WITHOUT IT, TOO.

SORRY.
I MUST SOUND MAD, OR...OR CREEPY, RANTING ABOUT GHOSTS ALL THE TIME.


HARDLY. I'M A BIT JEALOUS, ACTUALLY. YOUR LIFE SOUNDS LIKE IT'S STRAIGHT OUT OF SOME FANTASTICAL FOLKTALE!
BESIDES, IT'S NOT MAD TO BE PASSIONATE ABOUT YOUR WORK.
PEOPLE IN TOWN WOULD DISAGREE.
EVERY DAY, THEY REMIND ME WHY I QUITE PREFER THE COMPANY OF GHOSTS.
LOOK, I SHOULD BE THE ONE APOLOGIZING. I SHOULDN'T HAVE LET THE TOWNIES RUN THEIR MOUTHS ABOUT YOU LIKE THAT.
BUT DON'T LET 'EM GET TO YOU, DORIAN. YOU DO GOOD WORK.
THEY'RE LUCKY TO HAVE YOUR HELP AT ALL.
I...
THANK YOU, BRODY... THAT MEANS A LOT.
...AHEM.
ACH, THE OVEN!!
CHEERS.

DORIE, DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE OWEN'S BLATHERING ABOUT DEATH'S DOOR?
HE DIDN'T EXACTLY SEEM LUCID.
OF COURSE I BELIEVE HIM. I SAW DEATH'S DOOR BACK WHEN I FOUND YOU IN LIMBO. REMEMBER?
UGH. DON'T REMIND ME OF THAT DREADFUL PLACE.
ARE YOU QUITE SURE THAT'S WHAT YOU SAW? YOU WERE FIVE YEARS OLD, DEAR.
I'M POSITIVE, BUT...IT JUST DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.
I HAD NO TROUBLE OPENING IT BACK THEN, SO WHY COULDN'T OWEN? IS IT MERIT-BASED? IS IT RANDOM?
"MERIT-BASED"? PAH!
I'M CURIOUS HOW THAT EXORCIST KNEW SO MUCH ABOUT YOU.
I-I'M NOT SURE. IT'S NOT A GOOD SIGN.
I'D HATE TO HAVE TO LEAVE ANOTHER TOWN SO SOON.
WE JUST GOT HERE.
DON'T WORRY.
FIND OUT WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THAT SILLY DOOR, AND SEND OWEN ON HIS WAY.
REMEMBER, YOU HAVE SESSIONS WITH OTHER GHOSTS TOMORROW, TOO.
YES, I'LL TAKE CARE OF THEM–
BEFORE THE EXORCISTS DO.
BEFORE THE–YES, THANK YOU, GRAN.
WELL, I THINK I SHOULD LIKE TO STAY HOME TOMORROW...
...BECAUSE TODAY HAS BEEN A POSITIVELY EXHAUSTING DAY FOR ME.

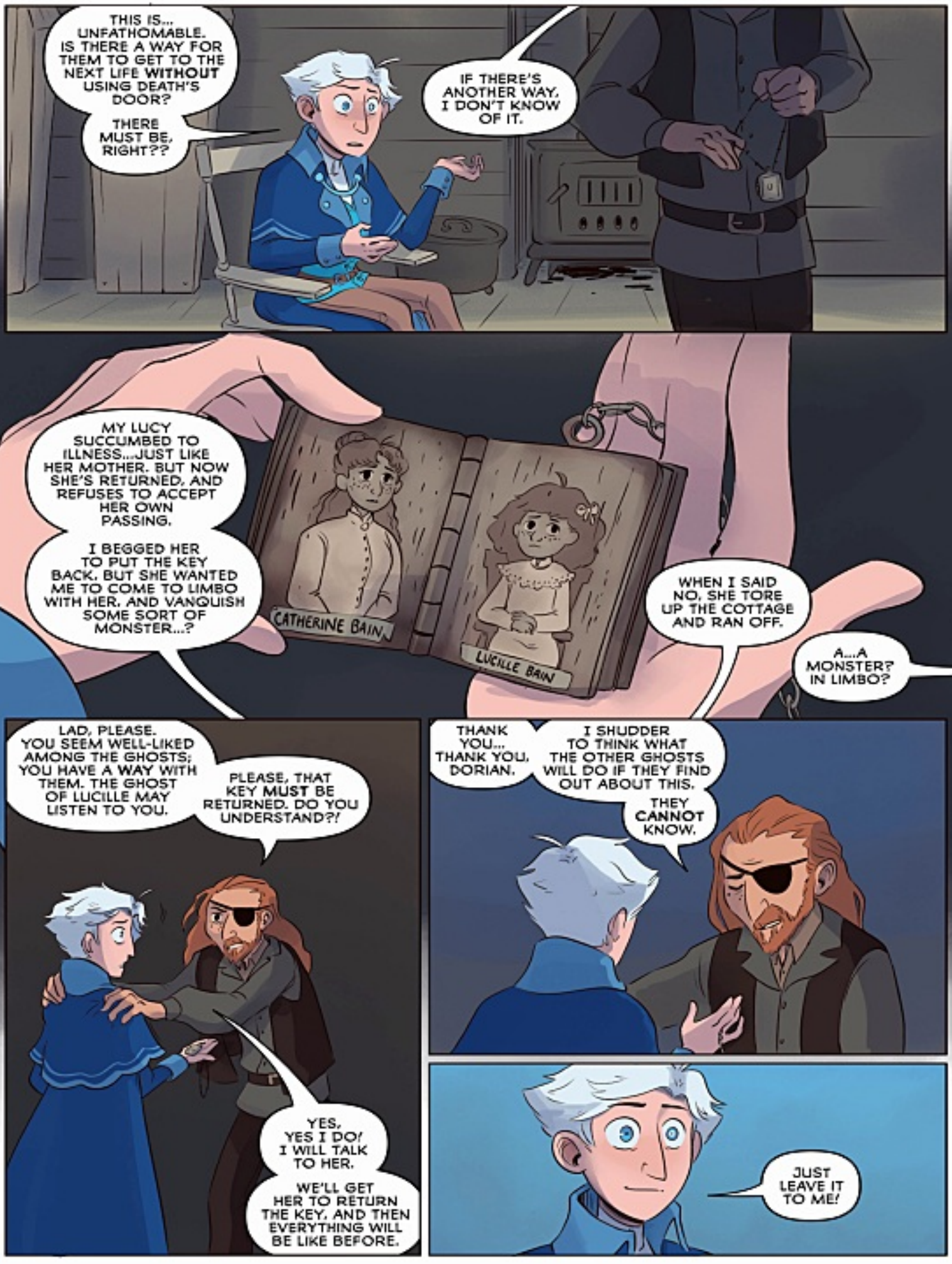

:GASP!:
JUST A DREAM...:HUFF:... JUST...
A DREAM.

OWEN? ARE YOU HERE?
IT'S DORIAN.
I'M HERE TO HELP YOU.
KIMBERLY JOHNSON
AAAAUGH!
HEY! ARE YOU-
ACH!
GO AWAY!
WHAT... WAS THAT?

LADDIE!
D-DON'T JUST STAND THERE. GO AFTER HER...!
SIR, ARE YOU HURT?? SHOULD I SEND FOR A DOCTOR?
AGH... NO, I'M FINE.
WAIT... YOU SAW HER?
THE GHOST OF THAT LITTLE GIRL?
AYE... I SAW HER.
BUT HOW?
MY EYEPATCH, LAD.
BRING IT TO ME, PLEASE.

YOU-YOU HAVE GHOST-SIGHT!
YOU'RE JUST LIKE ME!
OH, I'VE WAITED SO LONG TO MEET SOMEONE LIKE ME, LIKE US!
PATCH.
S-SORRY! I'M JUST SO EXCITED.
INDEED. WE SHARE THE SAME EYE. YOU'RE THE ONE WHO GOES AROUND TALKING TO THEM, EH?
YES, SIR. I SPECIALIZE IN GHOST THERAPY. DORIAN LEITH.
CONALL BAIN.
I'M GLAD YOU'VE COME. PERHAPS FATE TOOK PITY ON ME AND SENT YOU HERE.
THE GHOST THAT RAN OFF JUST NOW...USED TO BE MY DAUGHTER, LUCILLE.
YOUR DAUGHTER? OH... MY CONDOLENCES, MR. CONALL.
KEEP THEM. I HATE TO ASK, BUT I NEED YOUR HELP.
YOU SAW IT, DIDN'T YOU? THAT KEY SHE HAD?
I THINK SO?
"LIKE ME, YOU FIRST SAW IT WHEN YOU DIED, AND CAME BACK TO LIFE, WITH THAT ACCURSED RING AROUND YOUR EYE."
"H-HOW DID YOU-?"
"THAT'S THE KEY TO DEATH'S DOOR."

THE...KEY TO DEATH'S DOOR?
THE DEATH'S DOOR??
BUT HOW??
"I DON'T KNOW HOW. BUT SHE HAS TAKEN IT.
"AND WITHOUT THE KEY..."
...L-LOCKED... DEATH'S DOOR IS LOCKED.
SO NO GHOSTS CAN GO THROUGH IT TO ENTER THE NEXT LIFE? THEY'RE TRAPPED IN LIMBO?
AYE...
WITH DEATH'S DOOR SHUT AND LOCKED, LIMBO WILL OVERFLOW WITH NEW GHOSTS.
AND THE ONES LUCID ENOUGH TO AWAKEN BACK INTO THE LIVING WORLD WILL BE STRANDED HERE.
WITH US.


THIS IS... UNFATHOMABLE. IS THERE A WAY FOR THEM TO GET TO THE NEXT LIFE WITHOUT USING DEATH'S DOOR?
THERE MUST BE, RIGHT??
IF THERE'S ANOTHER WAY, I DON'T KNOW OF IT.
MY LUCY SUCCUMBED TO ILLNESS...JUST LIKE HER MOTHER. BUT NOW SHE'S RETURNED, AND REFUSES TO ACCEPT HER OWN PASSING.
I BEGGED HER TO PUT THE KEY BACK. BUT SHE WANTED ME TO COME TO LIMBO WITH HER. AND VANQUISH SOME SORT OF MONSTER...?
CATHERINE BAIN
LUCILLE BAIN
WHEN I SAID NO, SHE TORE UP THE COTTAGE AND RAN OFF.
A...A MONSTER? IN LIMBO?
LAD, PLEASE. YOU SEEM WELL-LIKED AMONG THE GHOSTS; YOU HAVE A WAY WITH THEM. THE GHOST OF LUCILLE MAY LISTEN TO YOU.
PLEASE, THAT KEY MUST BE RETURNED. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?!
YES, YES I DO! I WILL TALK TO HER.
WE'LL GET HER TO RETURN THE KEY, AND THEN EVERYTHING WILL BE LIKE BEFORE.
THANK YOU... THANK YOU, DORIAN.
I SHUDDER TO THINK WHAT THE OTHER GHOSTS WILL DO IF THEY FIND OUT ABOUT THIS.
THEY CANNOT KNOW.
JUST LEAVE IT TO ME!

"WE'LL RESOLVE THIS BEFORE ANY OF THEM EVEN KNOW IT HAPPENED."
HUFF! HUFF!
LUCY, WHERE ARE YOU??
LUCY?!
STOP! THIEF!
M-MY BAGUETTES!
THEY'RE FLOATING?!

KERY
BAKERY
LUCY, WAIT!
COME BACK!
SPLOOSH!

ACH! BOG, BOG, GET OUT OF THE BOG!
HEY!
WHO ARE YOU?! WHY ARE YOU FOLLOWING ME?
I, EHM, JUST WANT TO TALK. MY NAME IS–
GOODNESS, THAT'S RATHER STUCK IN. THERE–
S-SORRY. MY NAME IS DORIAN.
I DON'T CARE.
BUT I CAN HELP YOU WORK THROUGH YOUR GRIEF AND REGRETS, SO YOU CAN SLEEP AGAIN! WOULD YOU LIKE THAT?
I'M LIKE A... A DOCTOR, FOR SAD GHOSTS.
WELL, GUESS WHAT, DORIAN?
I'M NOT A SAD GHOST, AND I'M NOT SICK ANYMORE, SO I DON'T NEED A DOCTOR.

I'M NOT GIVING THE BREAD BACK, EITHER. IT'S FOR MY FRIENDS.
YOUR FRIENDS? ARE THEY GHOSTS, AS WELL?
I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO TALK TO STRANGERS.

FAIR ENOUGH. BUT IT'S NOT NICE TO STEAL, YOU KNOW.
I'M A FRIEND OF YOUR FATHER'S, AND HE'S VERY WORRIED ABOUT YOU.
I WAS WONDERING IF YOU'D LIKE TO TALK ABOUT THAT KEY YOU FOUND?
I KNEW IT! PAPA SENT YOU!
GET AWAY FROM ME!

HOLD ON! I DIDN'T MEAN–
CAWWW!
CRRK!
SHLUP!
CRAAAWK!
SIGH...
CURSE MY LUCK. I'D BETTER HEAD BACK, BEFORE–
BAKERY
BAKERY
OH NO.

GENTLEMEN.
DORIAN.
PERHAPS YOU COULD PUT THOSE EYES TO GOOD USE FOR US...FOR ONCE.
TELL ME WHERE IT IS. THE GHOST THAT BROKE THIS BREAD CART.
CONSIDER THIS MY OLIVE BRANCH. WITH EYES LIKE YOURS, AND OUR... RESOURCES, WE COULD RID THIS ENTIRE TOWN OF GHOSTS IN A FORTNIGHT.
DO WE HAVE AN ACCORD?
HEXOCRINE 4. COMPOUND
OTHERWISE, I SHALL HAVE TO FUMIGATE THIS BAKERY.
JUST TO BE SAFE.
NO THANK YOU. AND NO GHOSTS HERE! YOU SEE, I HAD A LOVELY CONVERSATION WITH THE GHOST ALREADY.
THEY AGREED TO DO SOME SOUL-SEARCHING, SO TO SPEAK, AND LEFT IN PEACE.
IF YOU TOOK CARE OF THE GHOST, WHERE ARE MY BAGUETTES?!
THE GHOST, ER... DROPPED THEM. THEY'RE VERY SORRY ABOUT IT.
I CAN PAY FOR THEM–
YOU HAD BETTER! IF I CATCH YOUR GHOST IN HERE AGAIN, IT'LL BE THE STOCKS FOR YOU!
IT WASN'T MY GH–
Y-YES, UNDER-STOOD.

LAST BOTTLE, SAUL. I'LL HEAD TO MARKET AND PICK UP MORE STRYCHNINE, SALT, AND-

-MARVELOUS IDEA, HECTOR.
PERHAPS YOU CAN BLURT OUT THE REST OF OUR CLASSIFIED FORMULA WHEN YOU GET THERE.
S-SORRY.
FOOL.

OH, AND DORIAN?

MIND THE BOG NEXT TIME.
SNICKER!

HA HA HA!
HMPH...

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU? YOU LOOK A MESS.
I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW, I'M PERFECTLY-!

OH.
H-HELLO.
HIYA.
STEP IN A PUDDLE, DID WE?
I FELL INTO THE BRAMBLES BOG CHASING A GHOST.
AH, THAT'LL DO IT.

HAVE YOU EVER HAD DAYS WHERE NOTHING SEEMS TO GO RIGHT FOR YOU?
AH, THAT WAS TODAY, FOR ME. I BOUND A CUSTOMER'S BOOK COVER UPSIDE DOWN...
TWICE.
HEAVENS. DID YOU REALLY??
I SURE DID.
ON DAYS LIKE THESE, I MAKE SOME SCONES TO CHEER MYSELF UP.
WE OUGHT TO DROWN OUR SORROWS IN SOME PASTRIES.
PERHAPS...
I'M SERIOUS, DORIAN! TONIGHT.
WHAT SAY WE MAKE A PROPER DATE OF IT? BAKE SOME SCONES TOGETHER?
A...A DATE?? YOU MEAN IT? YOU WEREN'T ONLY BEING POLITE?
T-THAT IS TO SAY, YES! I'D LIKE THAT!
I'D LIKE THAT VERY MUCH.

TARTE

AND LUCY BROKE THE BREAD CART AT THE BAKERY!
SHE'S A POLTERGEIST, HM? GOOD FOR HER.
IT'S ABOUT TIME A GHOST MADE A PROPER SCENE AROUND HERE.
SO HER GRAVEKEEPER FATHER HAD GHOST-SIGHT ALL THIS TIME?
CAN YOU BELIEVE IT??
I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE ANYMORE!
I CAN'T WAIT TO TALK TO HIM AGAIN!
WHAT I CAN'T BELIEVE IS THAT HE AND OWEN ARE BOTH SPOUTING OFF THAT RUBBISH ABOUT DEATH'S DOOR.
IT'S NOT RUBBISH, GRAN.
DEATH'S DOOR IS REAL, AND NOW WE'RE SHORT A KEY.
SO THAT'S THE ONLY WAY FOR EVERY GHOST TO ENTER THE NEXT LIFE? A SINGLE DOOR, WHOSE KEY CAN BE STOLEN AT ANY TIME?
I DON'T KNOW! THE ONES WHO SUCCESSFULLY MAKE IT TO DEATH'S DOOR TEND NOT TO RETURN TO ME TO TELL THE TALE, BECAUSE...WELL, WHY GO BACK, WHEN THE FABLED END OF YOUR JOURNEY–THE DOORWAY TO YOUR AFTERLIFE–IS RIGHT THERE?
WHY, INDEED.
THE ONES WHO DON'T FIND THE DOOR ARE USUALLY THE ONES WHO WAKE UP BACK INTO THE LIVING WORLD.

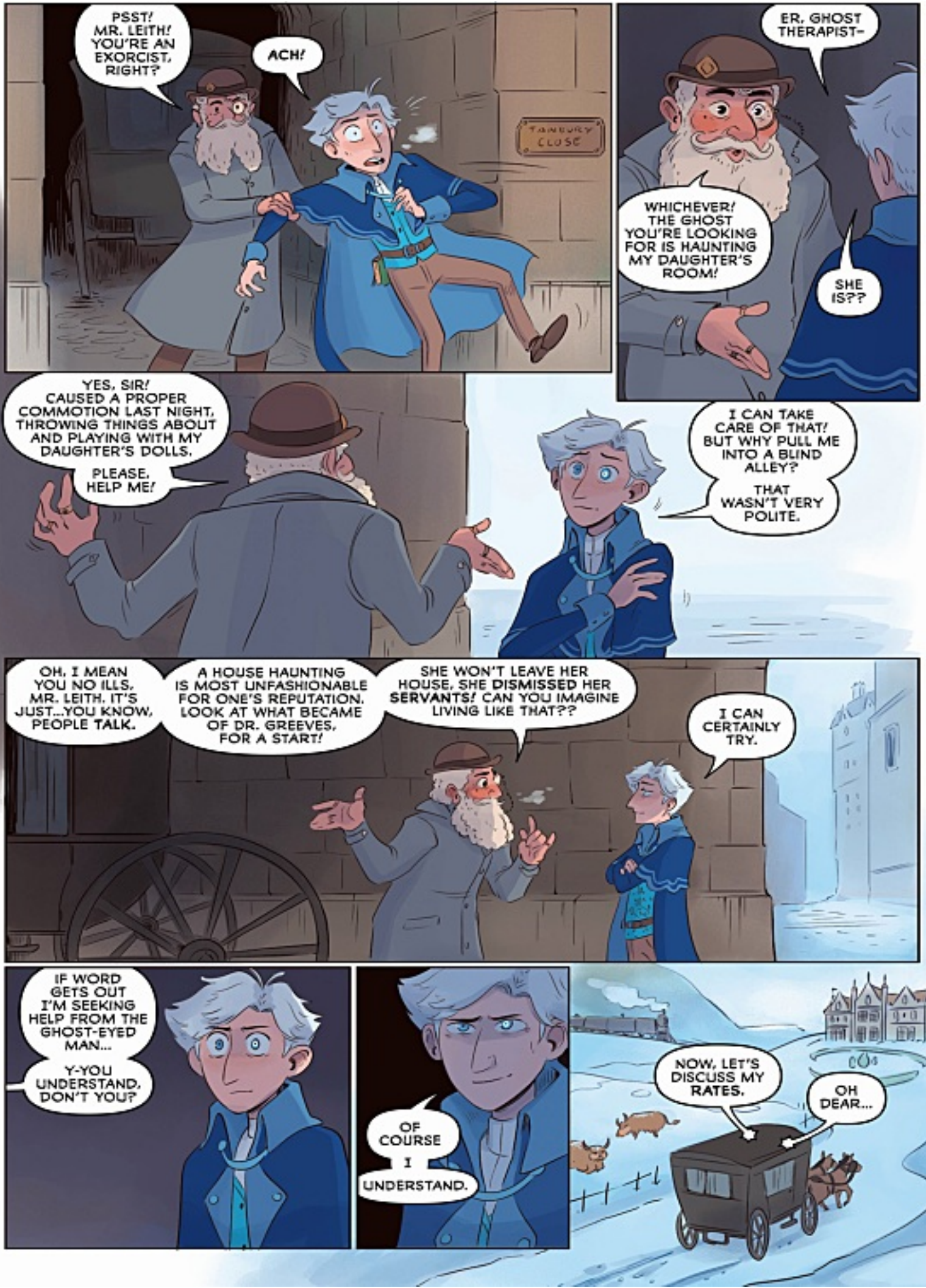
THAT MUST BE WHY THERE HAVE BEEN MORE GHOSTS AROUND TOWN LATELY. DEATH'S DOOR IS LOCKED, SO THEY HAVE NOWHERE ELSE TO GO NOW.
WHAT'S MORE, THE EXORCISTS ARE BACK IN TOWN...
NOW, THAT IS THE REAL PROBLEM. YOU CANNOT GET PAID BY YOUR LIVING PATRONS IF YOUR GHOSTS GET THEMSELVES EXORCISED.
BUT HOW AM I GOING TO FIND HER?
JUST FOLLOW THE MAYHEM. SHE'LL TURN UP.
IF I WAIT FOR HER TO TERRORIZE THE LIVING, THE EXORCISTS MIGHT FIND HER FIRST.
THEN MAKE THAT BLOODY CONALL BAIN DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!
I CAN'T IMPOSE UPON A GRIEVING FATHER.
OF COURSE YOU CAN! YOU'RE ALREADY DOING THIS FOR HIM FOR FREE, HEAVEN KNOWS WHY.
IF HE PUTS UP A FUSS, THEN CHARGE HIM EXTRA FOR WHINING.
KNOCK, KNOCK!
DORIAN? EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT IN THERE?
F-FINE! EVERYTHING'S FINE.
I'M, UM, JUST TALKING TO MY GRAN AGAIN.

ACTUALLY, I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE. THIS IS FOR YOU.
TO... THANK YOU, AND HOPEFULLY MAKE UP FOR THE ROUGH DAY YOU HAD.
:GASP!: FIFE'S NEW RECIPE BOOK??
THANK YOU, DORIAN. IT'S WONDERFUL!
YOU'RE QUITE WELCOME.
FIFE'S BOOK OF COOKERY
VALUABLE RECIPES
VOL. II
OH, BY THE WAY...
IF YOU GET STUCK IN THE BOG AGAIN TOMORROW, MIND YOUR CLOAK.
IF IT GETS WATERLOGGED, IT'LL WEIGH YOU DOWN AND MAKE YOU SINK MORE.
BUT I LIKE MY CLOAK! COULDN'T YOU JUST COME FISH ME OUT INSTEAD?
HA HA. I'LL BRING MY SWIMMING PANTS, THEN.
NIGHT, AND TELL YOUR GRAN I SAY HELLO.
NIGHT.
SUCH BANTER WITH YOUNG MR. BRINGHURST!
ARE YOU GOING TO TELL HIM HOW YOU FEEL, OR DO I HAVE TO?
AH!

N-NO, NO BANTER!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU–
B-BESIDES, HE WOULD NEVER...I COULDN'T RISK–
THE POINT IS, BRODY CAN'T KNOW ABOUT THIS. ABOUT LUCY, OR THE KEY...ANY OF IT!
WHY NOT? BRODY SEEMS FINE WITH GHOSTS TO ME.
BRODY'S FINE WITH YOU. IT'S A MIRACLE HE WAS WILLING TO ACCOMMODATE A TENANT WITH A GHOST IN THE FIRST PLACE.
I DON'T WANT HIM TO THINK THINGS ARE GETTING OUT OF CONTROL.
THINGS ARE NOT OUT OF CONTROL. YOU'RE DOING JUST FINE.
FOR NOW, PERHAPS.
BUT THERE'S A VERY THIN LINE BETWEEN "JUST FINE" AND "TOO MUCH," AND I NEVER KNOW WHERE IT IS FOR PEOPLE...UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE.
YOU WORRY TOO MUCH.
SIMPLY FIND THE GIRL AND TELL HER TO RETURN THE KEY.
HOW HARD COULD IT BE?

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS GHOST? SHE'S ABOUT NINE YEARS OLD?
NAY, SIR.
CURLED HAIR? RECENTLY DECEASED?
I'M LOOKING FOR A GHOST. THAT GIRL IS STILL ALIVE.
WHY, THERE SHE IS RIGHT NOW!
IS SHE STILL? BLESS HER WEE WOOLEN SOCKS...
HAVEN'T SEEN YOURS, THEN.

OPEN
WELCOME LUCY!
ANY MORE BREAD STOLEN THIS MORNING?
OVER MY DEAD BODY!
DON'T EVEN THINK OF BRINGING ANOTHER ONE TO MY SHOP, GHOST-EYED MAN!
YES, SIR!
I MEAN, NO, SIR!
IS ANYONE BEING HAUNTED BY THE GHOST OF A NINE-YEAR-OLD GIRL??


PSST! MR. LEITH! YOU'RE AN EXORCIST, RIGHT?
ACH!
TANBURY CLOSE
ER, GHOST THERAPIST–
WHICHEVER! THE GHOST YOU'RE LOOKING FOR IS HAUNTING MY DAUGHTER'S ROOM!
SHE IS??
YES, SIR! CAUSED A PROPER COMMOTION LAST NIGHT, THROWING THINGS ABOUT AND PLAYING WITH MY DAUGHTER'S DOLLS.
PLEASE, HELP ME!
I CAN TAKE CARE OF THAT! BUT WHY PULL ME INTO A BLIND ALLEY?
THAT WASN'T VERY POLITE.
OH, I MEAN YOU NO ILLS, MR. LEITH. IT'S JUST...YOU KNOW, PEOPLE TALK.
A HOUSE HAUNTING IS MOST UNFASHIONABLE FOR ONE'S REPUTATION. LOOK AT WHAT BECAME OF DR. GREEVES, FOR A START!
SHE WON'T LEAVE HER HOUSE, SHE DISMISSED HER SERVANTS! CAN YOU IMAGINE LIVING LIKE THAT??
I CAN CERTAINLY TRY.
IF WORD GETS OUT I'M SEEKING HELP FROM THE GHOST-EYED MAN...
Y-YOU UNDERSTAND, DON'T YOU?
OF COURSE I UNDERSTAND.
NOW, LET'S DISCUSS MY RATES.
OH DEAR...

IN HERE.
THANK YOU, SIR.
LUCY??
OH, FOR THE LOVE OF–
MUFFIN.
HISSSS!
MRAOOOWR!

I HOPE YOU'RE PROUD OF YOURSELF.
MRRHH.
SIGHE...
WELL, THEN. WHAT CAN DORIAN HELP YOU WITH TODAY, MUFFIN? ANY LINGERING GHOSTLY REGRETS?
MYEEH.
I SEE. TELL ME MORE.
MYAAH, MAAOOW.

LIKE YOUR NEW COLLAR? BRODY AND SHADOW WOULD LOVE YOU BACK AT THE SHOP.
IF YOU'D LIKE TO STICK AROUND, THAT IS.
PURR, PURR.
WHAT'S THIS, NOW?
BOOK·RO
BOOKS & BOOKBINDING · SECONDHAND
PARDON ME, EXCUSE ME.
WHERE IS IT? WHERE IS IT?!
THIS CANNOT BE!
DORIAN! WHAT'S HAPPENING??
HISSSS!

MR. OWEN?! WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS?
DORIAN, MY BOY!
I HEARD YOU TALKING TO THAT MAN IN THE CEMETERY!
THE KEY TO DEATH'S DOOR IS GONE?!
I'M TRAPPED HERE! TRAPPED!
H-HEY! PUT HIM DOWN, GHOST!
DO YOU HAVE IT?? DEATH'S DOOR IS LOCKED. I NEED THE KEY!
I MUST BE CLEANSED OF THIS HORRID, ITCHING ROT.
YOUR ROT'S COME BACK...
I CANNOT SLEEP, DORIAN!
REMAIN CALM...
REMEMBER OUR MEDITATION? FLOATING DOWN THE RIVER?
TWO HUNDRED YEARS I'VE WANDERED HERE...
S-SWIRLING EDDIES?
AND YOU WOULD HAVE ME WAIT TWO HUNDRED MORE!
I-I COULD SCHEDULE YOU FOR TOMORROW–

W-WHAT'S THIS...?
YOUR ROT...IT'S-
WAIT, THAT'S IT! MR. OWEN, IMAGINE YOURSELF CHANNELING YOUR ROT FROM YOUR HANDS INTO MINE...AND...
PERHAPS I CAN...SIMPLY... TAKE YOUR ROT AWAY?
Y-YES! INCREDIBLE! I KNEW YOU COULD WHISPER THE ROT AWAY WITH SOOTHING WORDS, BUT THIS!
I DID NOT KNOW YOU WERE CAPABLE OF SUCH A MIRACLE!
...NEITHER DID I.
DID YOU SEE THAT??
THAT YOUNG MAN MADE THE ROT DISAPPEAR!
ME NEXT!
YOU'LL HEAL MINE, TOO, WON'T YOU? IT'S KEEPING ME AWAKE.
ARE YOU THE GHOST HEALER?
YOUNG MAN, MY ROT IS BACK. CAN YOU-?
STOP.

ALL OF YOU, BREAK UP THIS DREADFUL HUBBUB.
MY GRANDSON IS A PROFESSIONAL, AND YOU WILL TREAT HIM LIKE ONE.
BUT I WOULD HATE TO BE COVERED IN ROT!
SETTLE DOWN AND FORM A QUEUE. WE HAVE A SYSTEM HERE, AND IT WILL BE FOLLOWED.
NOW, LET'S DO THIS PROPERLY. AND GO HAUNT THE MANSIONS, FOR GOODNESS' SAKE, SO DORIE CAN BE PAID WHAT HE'S WORTH.

BRODY... I'M SO, SO SORRY ABOUT ALL THIS. ARE YOU HURT?
ARE YOU? YOU WERE FLYING THROUGH THE AIR, DORIAN!
IS THAT USUALLY HOW YOUR "SESSIONS" GO?
WELL...I GIVE THE GHOSTS CONSENT TO PHYSICALLY INTERACT WITH ME WHEN I TREAT THEM. IT'S TO ESTABLISH TRUST. BUT I UNDERSTAND THAT CONSENT IS NOT EASILY REVOKED-
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN??
I-IT MEANS OWEN JUST GOT CARRIED AWAY, IS ALL!
LOOK, I DIDN'T MEAN FOR THIS TO HAPPEN.
THE TRUTH IS, THE KEY TO DEATH'S DOOR HAS BEEN STOLEN. I TOLD THE GHOSTS TO COME TO ME IF THEY HAD ANY TROUBLES, BUT...NOW THEY'RE TRAPPED IN THE LIVING WORLD, BRODY. THEY NEED ME TO HELP THEM.
YOU'VE BEEN SO GRACIOUS TO LET ME AND MY GRAN STAY HERE, AND PUT UP WITH MY...
MY STRANGENESS, BUT THIS...I UNDERSTAND IF THIS IS...
TOO MUCH.
IF...YOU'D RATHER I JUST LEAVE.

THE TOWNIES WARNED ME ABOUT YOU, YOU KNOW.
THEY TOLD ME THAT GHOSTS ARE DRAWN TO YOU...THAT YOU'RE CURSED, AND I WOULD BE A FOOL TO LET YOU LIVE WITH ME.
I'VE EVEN HEARD RUMORS THAT YOU HAVE MORE THAN JUST GHOSTS FOLLOWING YOU FROM TOWN TO TOWN.
BUT WHEN I LOOK AT YOU, DORIAN...
I SEE A MAN SO KIND, AND SO COMPASSIONATE, THAT EVEN THE DEAD WANT TO SPEND WHAT TIME THEY HAVE LEFT WITH HIM.
YOU SEE THINGS, AND FEEL THINGS IN A WAY THAT OTHERS CAN'T, AND I THINK THAT'S WONDERFUL.
I KNOW HOW LONELY IT CAN BE TO HAVE SO MANY FEELINGS, AND HOPES, AND FEARS...AND NO ONE YOU FEEL SAFE TO SHARE THEM WITH. BUT I WANT TO BE THAT PERSON FOR YOU.
BECAUSE...
...I LIKE YOU, DORIAN.
GHOSTS AND ALL.

BRODY, I...
I LIKE YOU, TOO.
IT'S JUST, THE CLOSER I GET TO PEOPLE, THE MORE I TEND TO SCARE THEM OFF.
AND I'VE BEEN DESPERATE FOR THAT TO CHANGE, TO HAVE...SOMEONE TO TALK TO. I AM SO RELIEVED THAT YOU-
I-I WANT TO LET YOU IN, BRODY...BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT LOOKS LIKE RIGHT NOW, BEYOND JUST-
I DON'T MIND.
THIS, RIGHT HERE, IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.
THE GHOSTS COULD BE A SELLING POINT FOR YOUR SHOP, YOU KNOW.
AH, RIGHT. NEED TO CHANGE THE SLOGAN A BIT, THEN.
"WELCOME TO BOOK ROOK, THE MOST HAUNTED BOOKSHOP IN ROOKWOOD."
"OUR BOOKS ARE LITERALLY FLYING OFF THE SHELVES!"
HA HA!

I ALMOST FORGOT! I BROUGHT HOME A SURPRISE FOR YOU!
OH, DID YOU? WHAT IS IT...?

TA-DA!
DORIAN, YOU BROUGHT HOME A GHOST?

A GHOST CAT, TO BE PRECISE.
MMR.
HISSSS!

HER NAME IS MUFFIN, AND SHE'S A SWEET OLD LADY! I EVEN PUT A BELL COLLAR ON HER, SO YOU CAN TELL WHERE SHE IS.
WANT TO HOLD HER? SHE NEEDS YOUR PERMISSION FIRST, OR SHE'LL GO RIGHT THROUGH YOU.
I-UM, MAYBE? SURE. YES.

HUH.
THIS GHOST IS QUITE FLUFFY.

BAP!
THP!

ALL OF THE GHOSTS HAVE BEEN ASSIGNED TO A HAUNT. YOU, MY DEAR, HAVE A VERY FULL MONTH AHEAD OF YOU.
THANKS, GRAN!
STEADY

YOUR NEW TECHNIQUE WITH OWEN'S ROT WAS MARVELOUS!
HOW DID YOU DO IT??
I-I'M NOT SURE. IT SORT OF CAME TO ME, I SUPPOSE.
BUT IT SEEMS LIKE A MUCH EASIER METHOD THAN HOW I WAS DOING IT BEFORE.
AT LEAST UNTIL I CAN FIX THIS...SITUATION WE'RE IN.

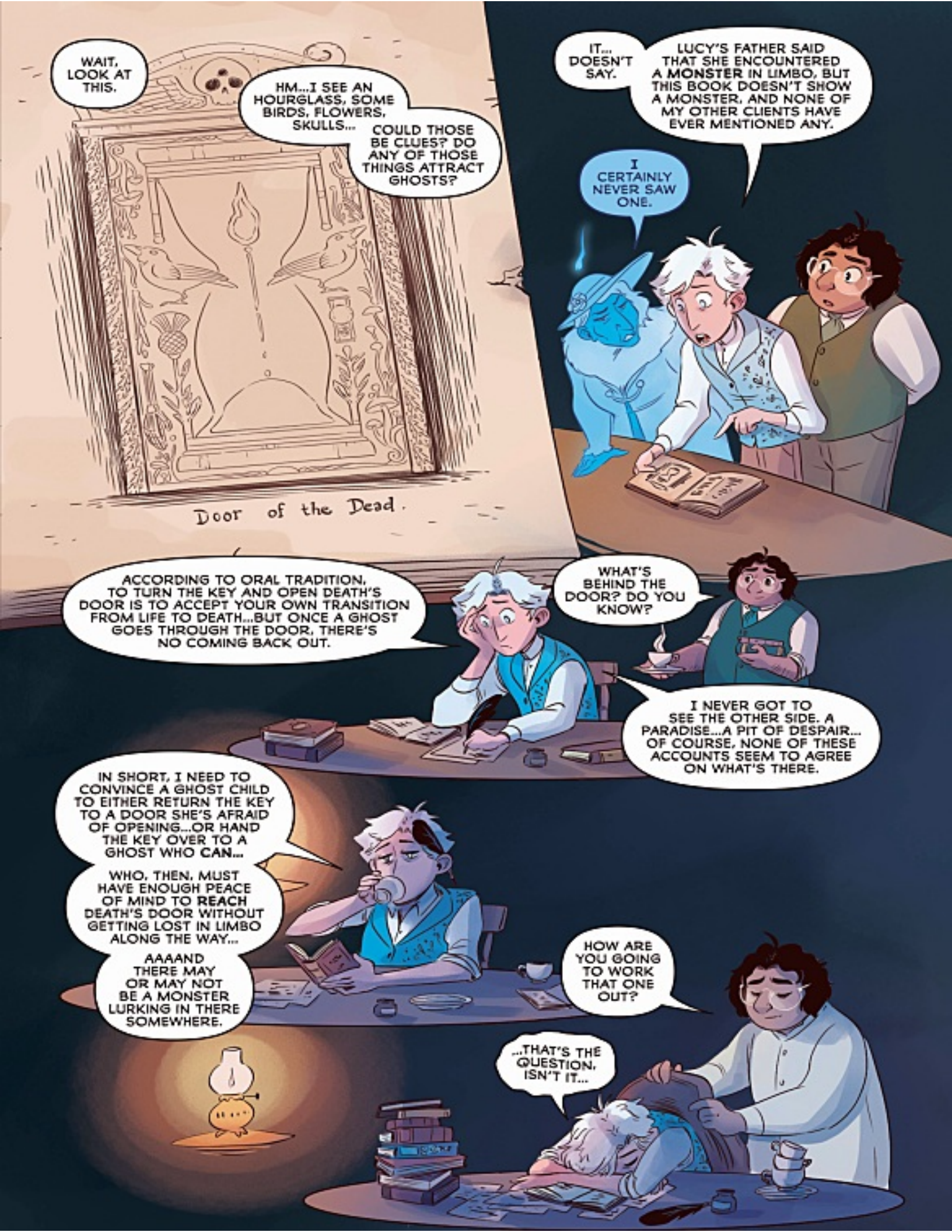
SO IT'S TRUE, THEN...
THE GHOSTS ARE STRANDED HERE WITHOUT THAT KEY.
SEEMS THAT WAY.

HMPH. ALL THIS DRAMA OVER A SILLY KEY.
I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR LUCY BETWEEN SESSIONS, WITH NO LUCK. I'M NOT SURE HOW TO TRACK DOWN A SPECIFIC GHOST.

BUT I MAY KNOW SOMEONE WHO DOES!
BRODY, I NEED TO BORROW SOME BOOKS ABOUT GHOSTS. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING LIKE-?

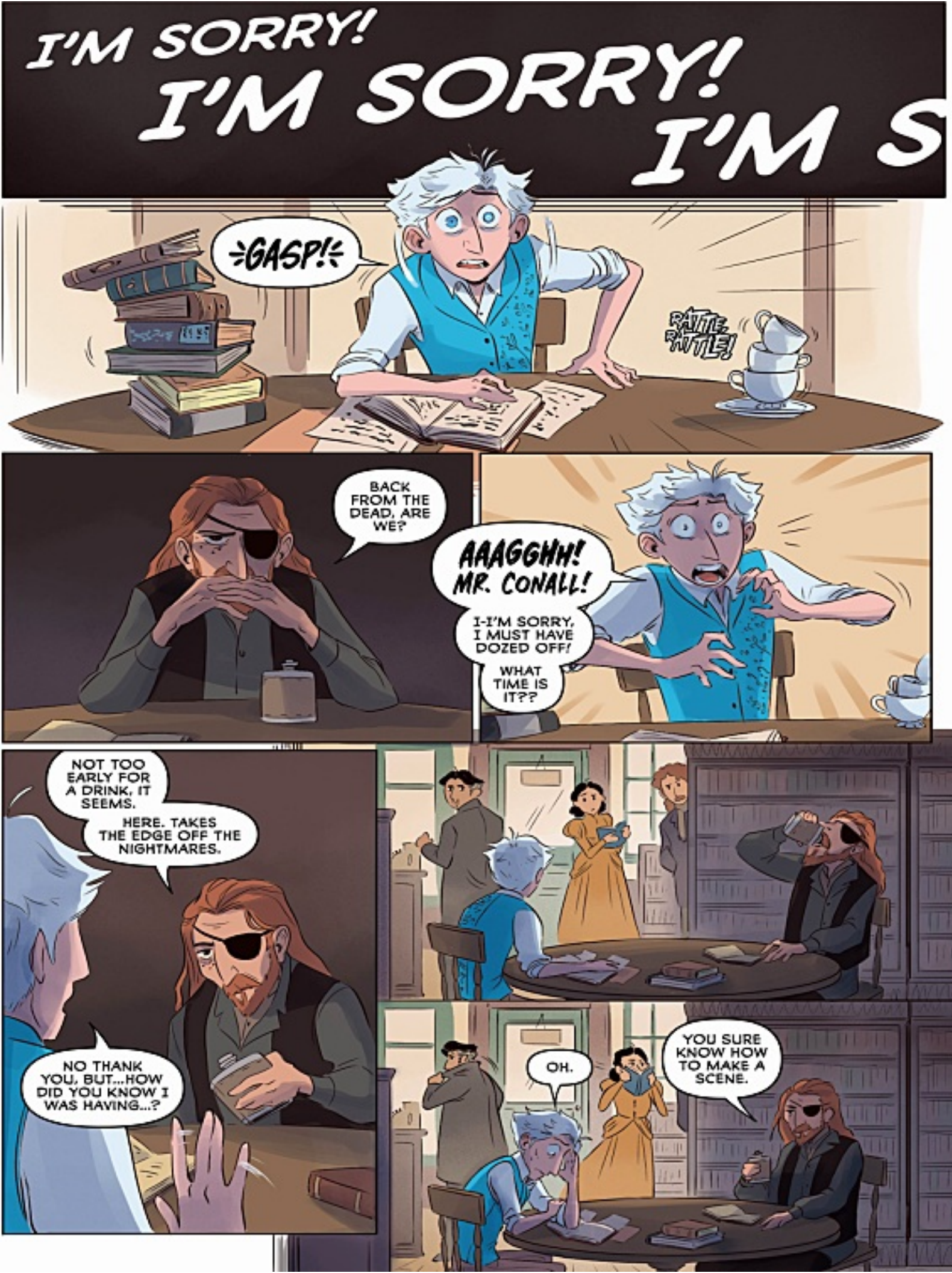
BIG BOOK OF GHOSTS
I MIGHT HAVE A FEW.

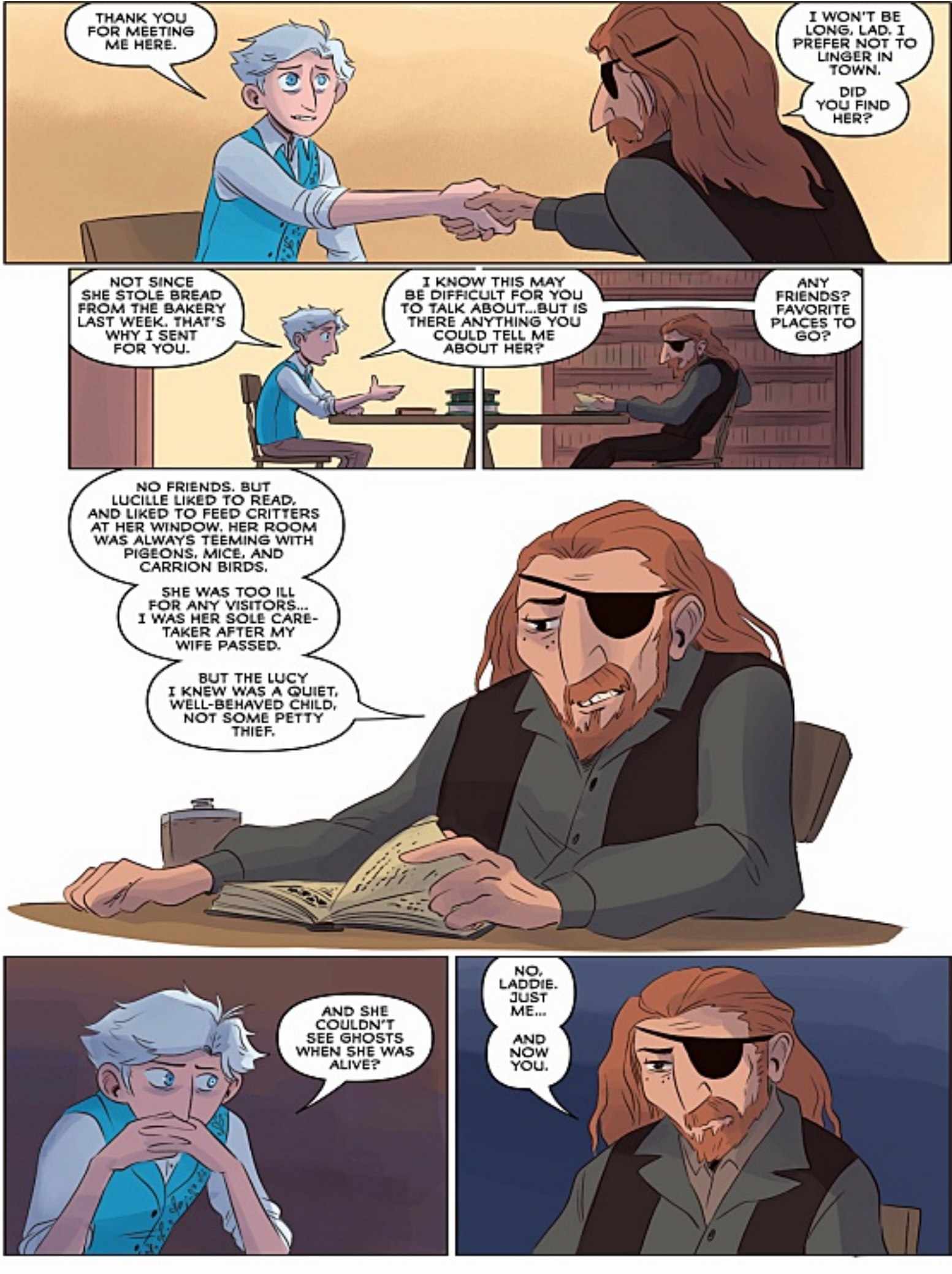
THE GHOST YOU'RE LOOKING FOR IS A GIRL, RIGHT?
EVER SEEN ONE OF THESE? A "BAN-SHEE"?
NO, BUT I'VE HEARD OF THEM...
"GHOSTLY WOMEN, WRACKED WITH INTENSE SORROW." MY POP TOLD ME HORROR STORIES ABOUT THEM, GROWING UP.
IF SO MUCH AS A CHICKEN DIED, HE WOULD BLAME IT ON A BANSHEE AND MAKE US STUFF OUR EARS WITH COTTON UNTIL MORNING.
Ban-
Sith.
THEY SAY BANSHEES DO A FAIR BIT OF WAILING, BUT...I THINK THEY'RE JUST FOLKTALES.
IN MY EXPERIENCE, A GHOST IS A GHOST, WHETHER HAPPY, SAD, OR ANGRY.
THAT LOOKS A BIT LIKE ROT, THOUGH, DOESN'T IT?
I SUPPOSE...
I READ THAT BANSHEES SHOW UP AROUND SICK PEOPLE. SO IF LUCY WERE A BANSHEE, WE'D JUST HAVE TO FIND OURSELVES A SICK PERSON.
LUCY SAID SHE WAS ILL, BUT...NOT ANYMORE, CLEARLY. IS THE BANSHEE THE ONE THAT KILLS PEOPLE WITH THEIR SCREAMS?
YEP, THAT'S THE ONE.
HOW ABOUT BLOOD? DOES LUCY LIKE TO DRINK BLOOD?
WH-BLOOD??
SHE'S NOT A VAMPIRE, THEN?
NO, WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU READING??
THE PEASANT'S GUIDE TO BOGEYS AND BEASTIES.
HOW ABOUT THE GRIM REAPER? TALKED TO HIM YET, HAVE WE?
I'M QUITE SURE NONE OF THAT IS REAL, BRODY.

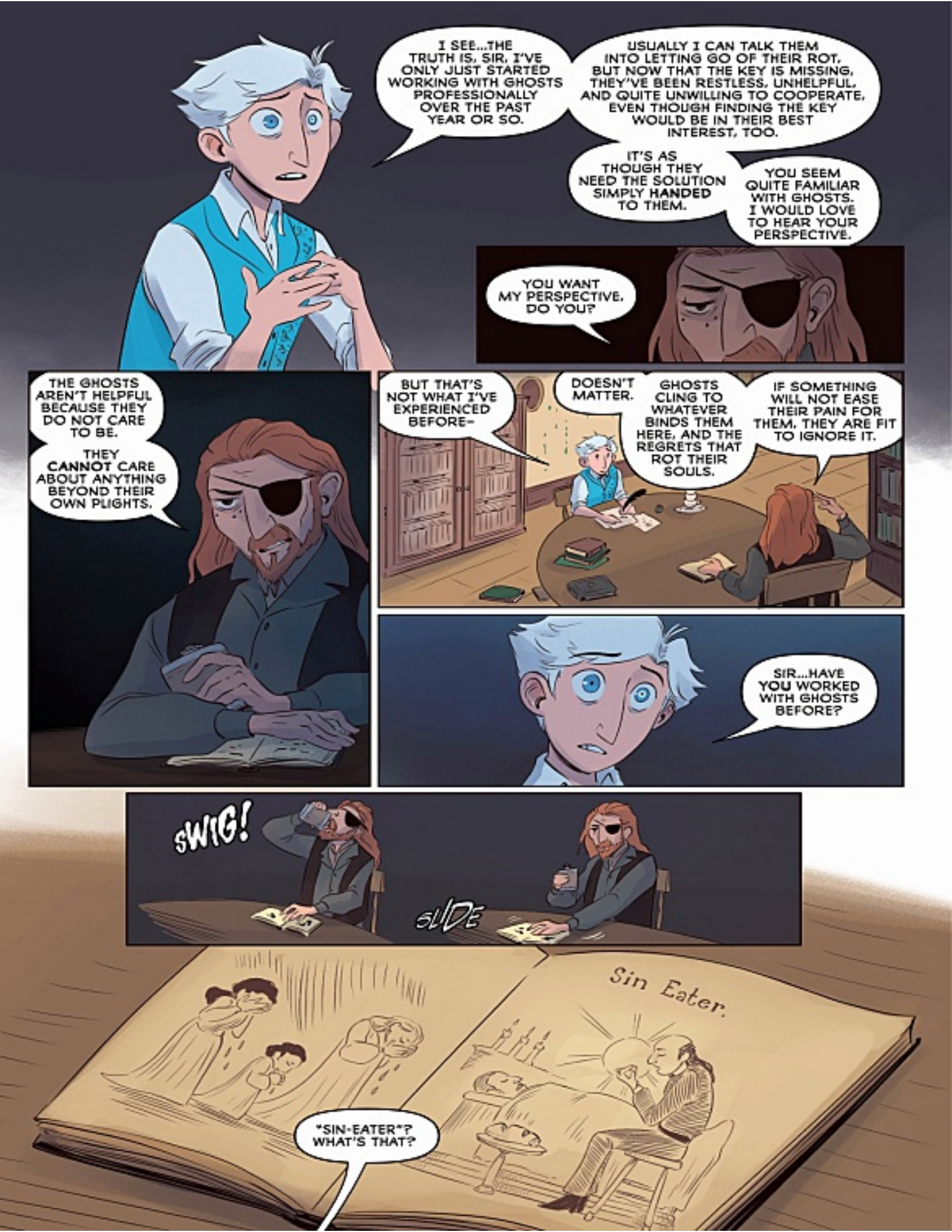

WAIT, LOOK AT THIS.
HM...I SEE AN HOURGLASS, SOME BIRDS, FLOWERS, SKULLS...
COULD THOSE BE CLUES? DO ANY OF THOSE THINGS ATTRACT GHOSTS?
Door of the Dead.
IT... DOESN'T SAY.
LUCY'S FATHER SAID THAT SHE ENCOUNTERED A MONSTER IN LIMBO, BUT THIS BOOK DOESN'T SHOW A MONSTER, AND NONE OF MY OTHER CLIENTS HAVE EVER MENTIONED ANY.
I CERTAINLY NEVER SAW ONE.
ACCORDING TO ORAL TRADITION, TO TURN THE KEY AND OPEN DEATH'S DOOR IS TO ACCEPT YOUR OWN TRANSITION FROM LIFE TO DEATH...BUT ONCE A GHOST GOES THROUGH THE DOOR, THERE'S NO COMING BACK OUT.
WHAT'S BEHIND THE DOOR? DO YOU KNOW?
I NEVER GOT TO SEE THE OTHER SIDE. A PARADISE...A PIT OF DESPAIR... OF COURSE, NONE OF THESE ACCOUNTS SEEM TO AGREE ON WHAT'S THERE.
IN SHORT, I NEED TO CONVINCE A GHOST CHILD TO EITHER RETURN THE KEY TO A DOOR SHE'S AFRAID OF OPENING...OR HAND THE KEY OVER TO A GHOST WHO CAN...
WHO, THEN, MUST HAVE ENOUGH PEACE OF MIND TO REACH DEATH'S DOOR WITHOUT GETTING LOST IN LIMBO ALONG THE WAY...
AAAAND THERE MAY OR MAY NOT BE A MONSTER LURKING IN THERE SOMEWHERE.
HOW ARE YOU GOING TO WORK THAT ONE OUT?
...THAT'S THE QUESTION, ISN'T IT...

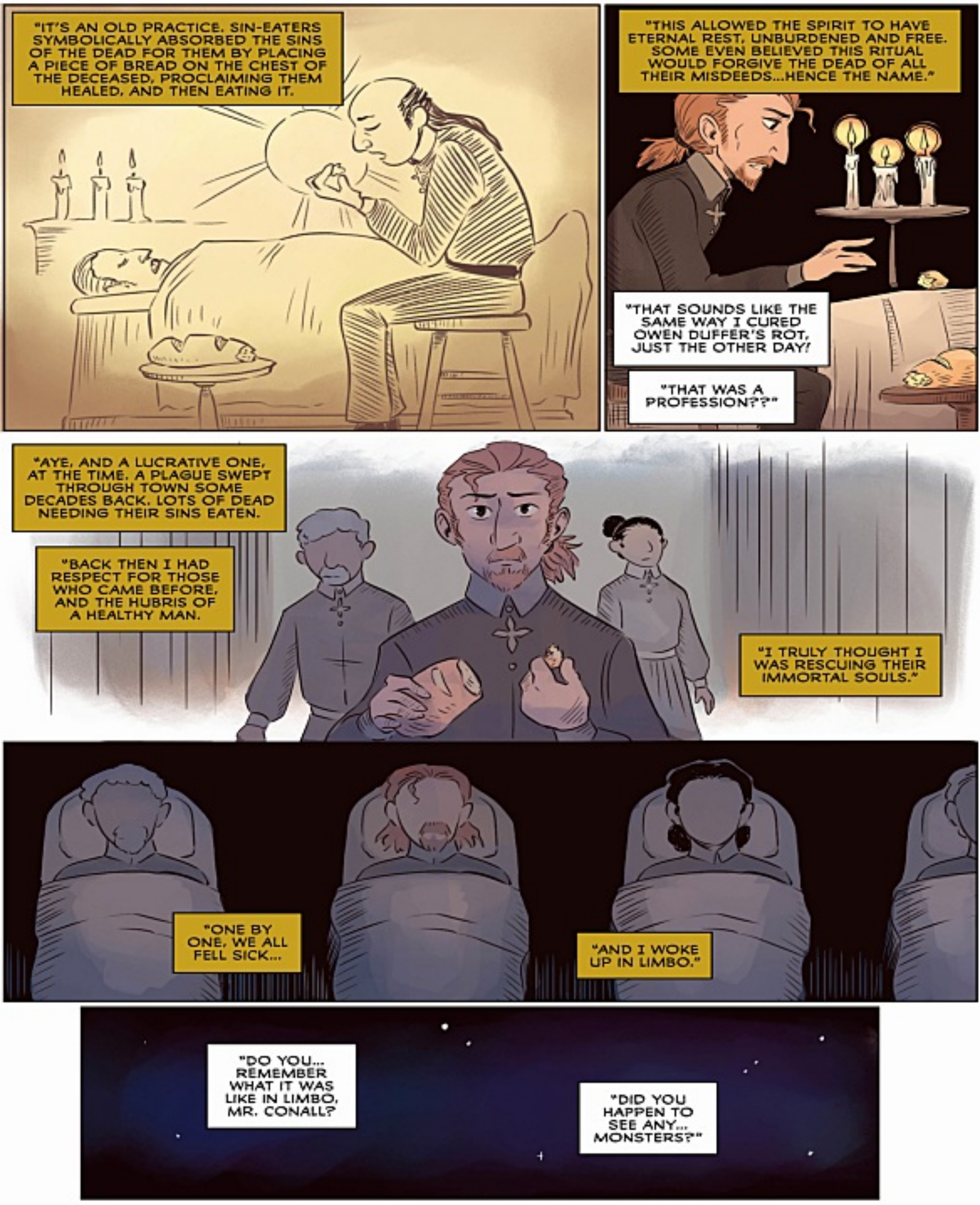
PLEASE, FORGIVE MY SON...
DORIAN SEES THINGS THAT AREN'T...
HIS MIND IS HAUNTED...
HE'S NOT WELL, HE NEEDS A DOCTOR-I'M SORRY...
I'M SO SORRY...
YOU SEE...
HE'S...
CURSED.
OWEN...? WHY AREN'T YOU HAUNTING THE MANOR WE ASSIGNED YOU TO? IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT?
NO... EVERYTHING IS NOT ALL RIGHT...

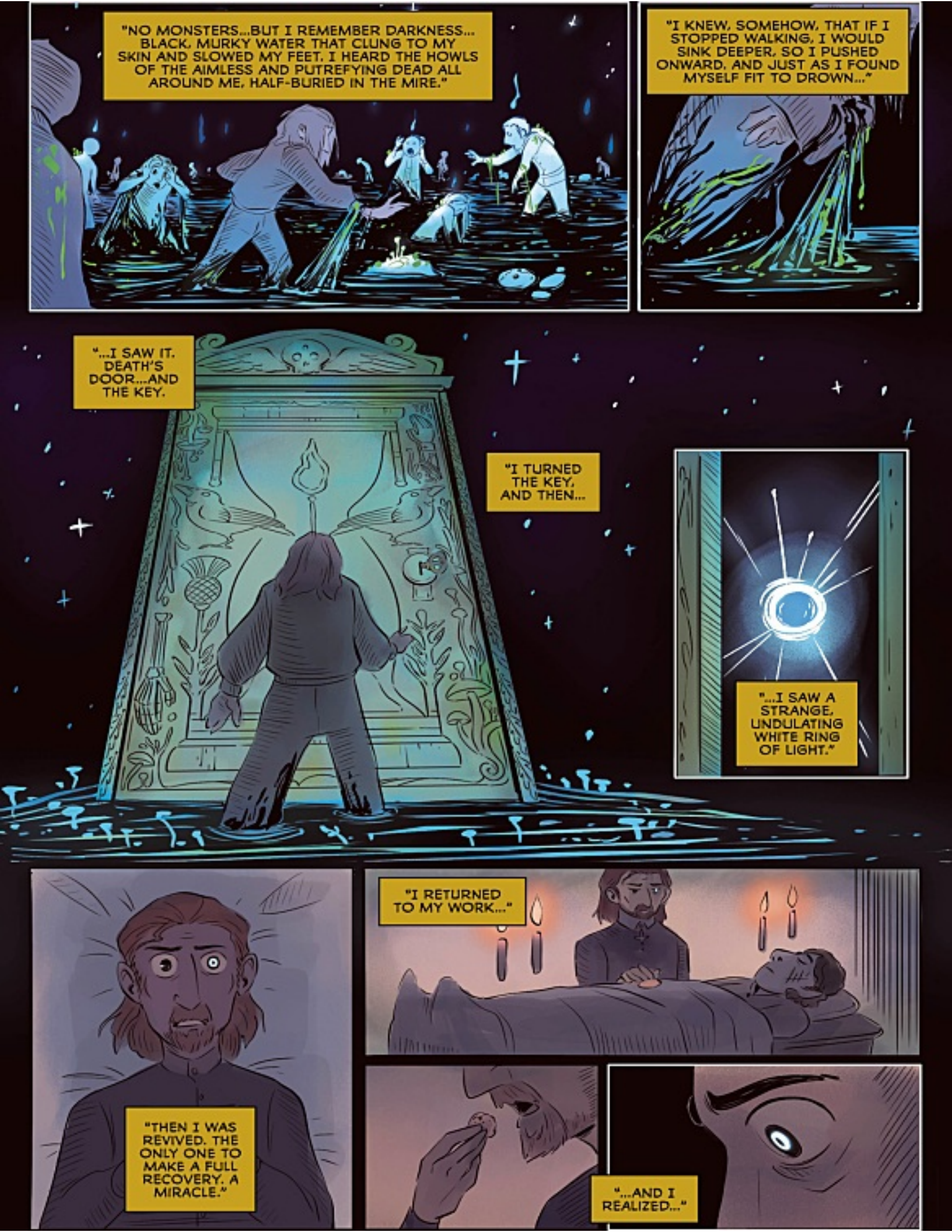
I SLOGGED THROUGH THE MIRES OF LIMBO BECAUSE YOU TOLD ME IT WOULD BE WORTH THE JOURNEY TO DEATH'S DOOR.
AND WHAT WAS MY REWARD?
A LOCKED DOOR WITH NO KEY!
ROT THAT DOES NOT HEAL!
I-I'M GOING TO HELP YOU. I JUST NEED SOME TIME TO FIGURE THINGS OUT!
NOW, IF YOU WOULD PLEASE GO BACK TO YOUR-
I'VE BEEN DENIED MY ETERNAL REST.
I'M TRAPPED HERE,
TAUNTED BY THE JOYS OF THE LIVING, WITH ROT THAT GROWS AND REGROWS, FESTERS AND BITES AT MY SOUL.
YOU SAID YOU WOULD TAKE IT ALL AWAY. YOU SAID YOU WOULD HELP ME PASS FROM THIS WORLD!
I-I'M SORRY.
WHERE IS MY REST, DORIAN?! WHERE IS THE KEY?!
I-I DON'T KNOW! I'M WORKING ON GETTING IT RETURNED! I'M SORRY, I NEED MORE TIME! AFTER SOME S-SLEEP, I CAN-
SLEEP? OH NO.
I CANNOT SLEEP, BOY... FOR I HAVE BEEN ROBBED OF MY AFTERLIFE.
I SHALL NEVER SLEEP AGAIN...
AND NEITHER SHALL YOU.


I'M SORRY!
I'M SORRY!
I'M S
GASP!
RATTLE, RATTLE!
BACK FROM THE DEAD, ARE WE?
AAAGGHH! MR. CONALL!
I-I'M SORRY, I MUST HAVE DOZED OFF!
WHAT TIME IS IT??
NOT TOO EARLY FOR A DRINK, IT SEEMS.
HERE. TAKES THE EDGE OFF THE NIGHTMARES.
NO THANK YOU, BUT...HOW DID YOU KNOW I WAS HAVING...?
OH.
YOU SURE KNOW HOW TO MAKE A SCENE.


THANK YOU FOR MEETING ME HERE.
I WON'T BE LONG, LAD. I PREFER NOT TO LINGER IN TOWN.
DID YOU FIND HER?
NOT SINCE SHE STOLE BREAD FROM THE BAKERY LAST WEEK. THAT'S WHY I SENT FOR YOU.
I KNOW THIS MAY BE DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO TALK ABOUT...BUT IS THERE ANYTHING YOU COULD TELL ME ABOUT HER?
ANY FRIENDS? FAVORITE PLACES TO GO?
NO FRIENDS. BUT LUCILLE LIKED TO READ, AND LIKED TO FEED CRITTERS AT HER WINDOW. HER ROOM WAS ALWAYS TEEMING WITH PIGEONS, MICE, AND CARRION BIRDS.
SHE WAS TOO ILL FOR ANY VISITORS... I WAS HER SOLE CARE-TAKER AFTER MY WIFE PASSED.
BUT THE LUCY I KNEW WAS A QUIET, WELL-BEHAVED CHILD, NOT SOME PETTY THIEF.
AND SHE COULDN'T SEE GHOSTS WHEN SHE WAS ALIVE?
NO, LADDIE. JUST ME...
AND NOW YOU.

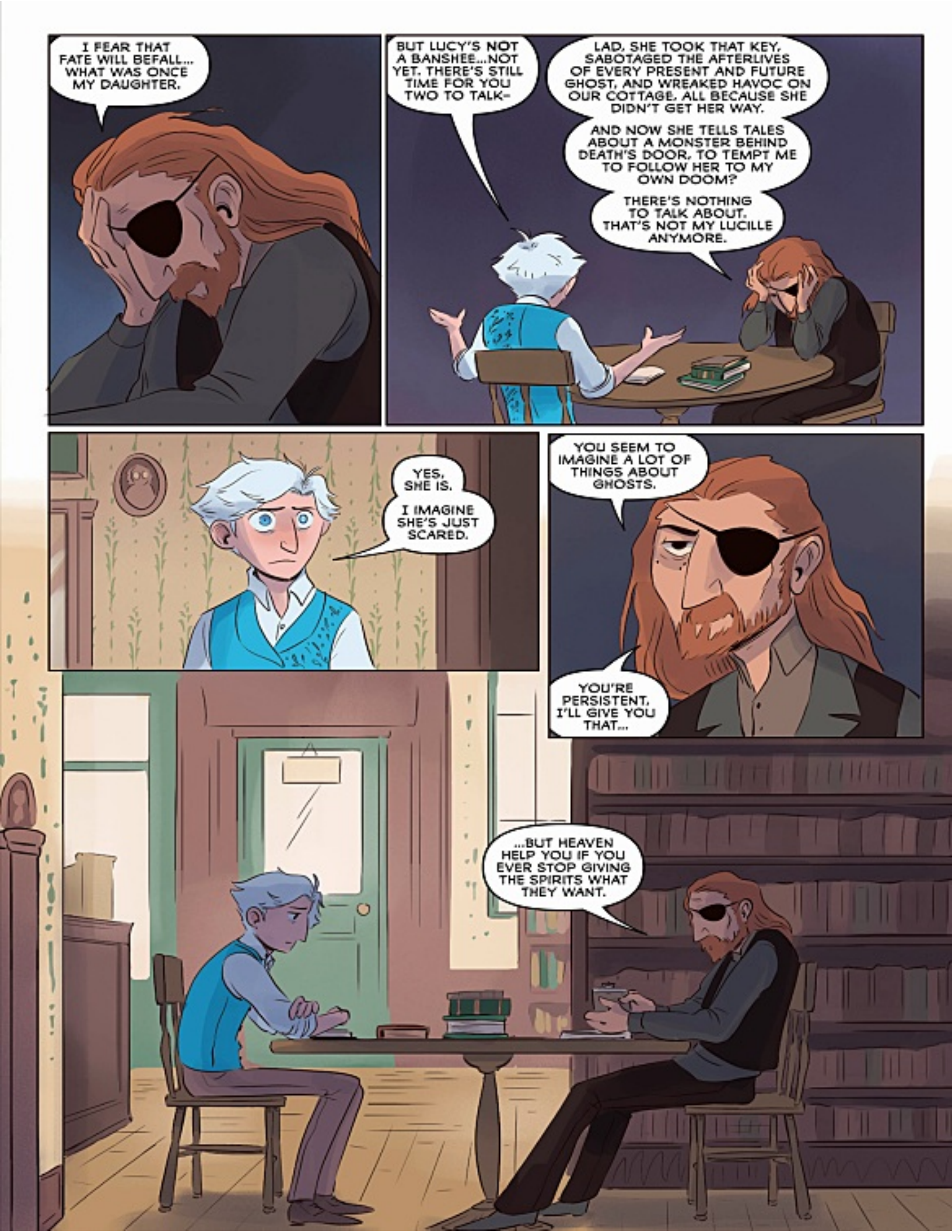

I SEE...THE TRUTH IS, SIR, I'VE ONLY JUST STARTED WORKING WITH GHOSTS PROFESSIONALLY OVER THE PAST YEAR OR SO.
USUALLY I CAN TALK THEM INTO LETTING GO OF THEIR ROT. BUT NOW THAT THE KEY IS MISSING, THEY'VE BEEN RESTLESS, UNHELPFUL, AND QUITE UNWILLING TO COOPERATE, EVEN THOUGH FINDING THE KEY WOULD BE IN THEIR BEST INTEREST, TOO.
IT'S AS THOUGH THEY NEED THE SOLUTION SIMPLY HANDED TO THEM.
YOU SEEM QUITE FAMILIAR WITH GHOSTS. I WOULD LOVE TO HEAR YOUR PERSPECTIVE.
YOU WANT MY PERSPECTIVE, DO YOU?
THE GHOSTS AREN'T HELPFUL BECAUSE THEY DO NOT CARE TO BE.
THEY CANNOT CARE ABOUT ANYTHING BEYOND THEIR OWN PLIGHTS.
BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT I'VE EXPERIENCED BEFORE-
DOESN'T MATTER.
GHOSTS CLING TO WHATEVER BINDS THEM HERE, AND THE REGRETS THAT ROT THEIR SOULS.
IF SOMETHING WILL NOT EASE THEIR PAIN FOR THEM, THEY ARE FIT TO IGNORE IT.
SIR...HAVE YOU WORKED WITH GHOSTS BEFORE?
SWIG!
SLIDE
Sin Eater.
"SIN-EATER"? WHAT'S THAT?


"IT'S AN OLD PRACTICE. SIN-EATERS SYMBOLICALLY ABSORBED THE SINS OF THE DEAD FOR THEM BY PLACING A PIECE OF BREAD ON THE CHEST OF THE DECEASED, PROCLAIMING THEM HEALED. AND THEN EATING IT.
"THIS ALLOWED THE SPIRIT TO HAVE ETERNAL REST, UNBURDENED AND FREE. SOME EVEN BELIEVED THIS RITUAL WOULD FORGIVE THE DEAD OF ALL THEIR MISDEEDS...HENCE THE NAME."
"THAT SOUNDS LIKE THE SAME WAY I CURED OWEN DUFFER'S ROT, JUST THE OTHER DAY!
"THAT WAS A PROFESSION??"
"AYE, AND A LUCRATIVE ONE, AT THE TIME. A PLAGUE SWEPT THROUGH TOWN SOME DECADES BACK. LOTS OF DEAD NEEDING THEIR SINS EATEN.
"BACK THEN I HAD RESPECT FOR THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE, AND THE HUBRIS OF A HEALTHY MAN.
"I TRULY THOUGHT I WAS RESCUING THEIR IMMORTAL SOULS."
"ONE BY ONE, WE ALL FELL SICK...
"AND I WOKE UP IN LIMBO."
"DO YOU... REMEMBER WHAT IT WAS LIKE IN LIMBO, MR. CONALL?
"DID YOU HAPPEN TO SEE ANY... MONSTERS?"


"NO MONSTERS...BUT I REMEMBER DARKNESS... BLACK, MURKY WATER THAT CLUNG TO MY SKIN AND SLOWED MY FEET. I HEARD THE HOWLS OF THE AIMLESS AND PUTREFYING DEAD ALL AROUND ME, HALF-BURIED IN THE MIRE."
"I KNEW, SOMEHOW, THAT IF I STOPPED WALKING, I WOULD SINK DEEPER. SO I PUSHED ONWARD. AND JUST AS I FOUND MYSELF FIT TO DROWN..."
"...I SAW IT. DEATH'S DOOR...AND THE KEY.
"I TURNED THE KEY, AND THEN...
"...I SAW A STRANGE, UNDULATING WHITE RING OF LIGHT."
"THEN I WAS REVIVED. THE ONLY ONE TO MAKE A FULL RECOVERY. A MIRACLE."
"I RETURNED TO MY WORK..."
"...AND I REALIZED..."

"...I COULD SEE THE SINS I WAS EATING.
"I COULD SEE THE GHOST THEY BELONGED TO.
"AND THE GHOST COULD SEE ME."
"GHOSTS WERE EVERYWHERE, ENTREATING ME TO EAT THEIR ROT. THEY FLOCKED TO ME; FOR I, ALONE, COULD GIVE THEM RELIEF.
"AND THE MORE I INDULGED THEM... THE MORE THEY DEMANDED OF ME."
"WHEN MY WIFE SUCCUMBED TO THE PLAGUE, YEARS LATER..."

"...SHE WAS CORRUPTED BY THE ROT THAT FED ON HER GRIEF...AND BEGAN TO SHRIEK.
"BEGGING ME TO STOP THE PAIN, TO JOIN HER IN DEATH AND SHARE IN HER TORMENT. THE ROT INFESTED CATHERINE'S SOUL, UNTIL ALL THAT WAS LEFT...
"WAS A BANSHEE."
"BANSHEES ARE REAL? HER SCREAM DIDN'T KILL YOU??"
"A BANSHEE'S SCREAM WON'T KILL YOU, LAD.
"BUT WITH THE BOUT OF MADNESS IT INFLICTS ON THE MORTAL MIND...
"...PERHAPS YOU WILL WISH IT HAD."
WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR WIFE'S GHOST?
YOUR SIN-EATING... DID IT CURE HER?
"NO AMOUNT OF SIN-EATING CAN CURE A BANSHEE.
"YOU CAN ONLY WAIT FOR THE ROT TO DEVOUR IT...
"BEFORE THE BANSHEE DEVOURS YOU."


I FEAR THAT FATE WILL BEFALL... WHAT WAS ONCE MY DAUGHTER.
BUT LUCY'S NOT A BANSHEE...NOT YET. THERE'S STILL TIME FOR YOU TWO TO TALK-
LAD, SHE TOOK THAT KEY, SABOTAGED THE AFTERLIVES OF EVERY PRESENT AND FUTURE GHOST, AND WREAKED HAVOC ON OUR COTTAGE. ALL BECAUSE SHE DIDN'T GET HER WAY.
AND NOW SHE TELLS TALES ABOUT A MONSTER BEHIND DEATH'S DOOR, TO TEMPT ME TO FOLLOW HER TO MY OWN DOOM?
THERE'S NOTHING TO TALK ABOUT. THAT'S NOT MY LUCILLE ANYMORE.
YES, SHE IS.
I IMAGINE SHE'S JUST SCARED.
YOU SEEM TO IMAGINE A LOT OF THINGS ABOUT GHOSTS.
YOU'RE PERSISTENT. I'LL GIVE YOU THAT...
...BUT HEAVEN HELP YOU IF YOU EVER STOP GIVING THE SPIRITS WHAT THEY WANT.

WHY US? WHY DID WRETCHES LIKE US COME BACK TO LIFE, AND MY WIFE, MY CHILD, DID NOT?
WHY DO WE SUFFER THIS CURSE ALONE, FOR TOUCHING DEATH'S DOOR BEFORE OUR TIME?
...I DON'T KNOW.
IF YOU CAN PROVE THAT THAT GHOST HASN'T LOST ALL REASON...IF YOU CAN GET THROUGH TO IT BEFORE IT BECOMES A BANSHEE...
I WILL CONSIDER TALKING TO IT.
BUT FOR NOW, YOU ASK TOO MUCH OF ME.
EYEPATCH STAYS ON, HEAD STAYS DOWN.
I-I DIDN'T MEAN TO UPSET YOU, MR. CONALL. I'M JUST WORRIED.
EVER SINCE THE EXORCISTS CAME BACK INTO TOWN–
THE EXORCISTS ARE IN TOWN AGAIN?

YES... I TAKE IT YOU KNOW ABOUT THEM ALREADY.
THEY'RE A WEE BIT HARD TO MISS.
I'LL LEAVE YOU TO YOUR GHOST-HUNTING, LADDIE. I'VE STAYED HERE TOO LONG.
WAIT, MR. CONALL, ONE MORE THING!
IF YOU'RE SO CONFIDENT THAT THERE IS NO MONSTER BEHIND DEATH'S DOOR...
THEN WHAT IS BEHIND IT?
KNOWING MIGHT HELP BRING LUCY SOME PEACE OF MIND.
COULDN'T TELL YOU, LAD.
DIDN'T GET A GOOD LOOK.
OPEN
OFF WITH YOU!
BLOODY BIRDS.
CAW!
BIRDS... THAT'S IT!
YOU WERE AT THE BOG WITH LUCY!

H-HELLO. WE MET IN THE BRAMBLES A WHILE BACK. WITH LUCY. HAVE YOU SEEN HER?
CRRK!
DO YOU WATCH OVER THE DEAD? IS THAT WHY CROWS ARE DEPICTED ON DEATH'S DOOR?
WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO TAKE ME TO LUCY?
THE VIAL SHATTERED ON THE FLOOR...
I KNEW HEXOCRINE COULD BE TOXIC, BUT... THE GAS, IT SPREAD SO FAST... SAW MY COHORT FOAMING AT THE MOUTH...
AND NEXT THING I KNEW, MY THROAT WAS BURNING LIKE I SWALLOWED ACID, AND–
I'M SUPPOSED TO TAKE CARE OF THIS HOUSE, AND NOW THESE STRANGERS LIVE HERE!
HOW DOES THAT MAKE YOU FEEL?

I'D VERY MUCH LIKE TO HELP HER.
IT'S ALL RIGHT. I'LL COME BACK AGAIN TOMORROW.
TELL THEM TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE WALLPAPER IN HERE. IT'S POSITIVELY GHASTLY.
AVENGE MY DEATH...
ORRRR... WE CAN TALK ABOUT IT.

CHIRP.
NO, NO! COME BACK!
PLEASE, EDGAR!
PLEASE DON'T LEAVE ME!
FINE! GO OFF, THEN!
I DON'T NEED YOU ANYWAY!
I DON'T NEED ANYONE!
HMPH.

HELLO, LUCY.
I-I RAN OUT OF BREAD.
I NEED SOME OF YOURS.
I-IF YOU DON'T GIVE ME BREAD, I'LL...
I'LL HAUNT YOU...BECAUSE I'M A GH...
A GHO...
TRY SOME OF THESE INSTEAD. THEY'RE GOOD FOR BIRDS.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO TELL ME WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?

I DON'T KNOW...
SHAKE SHAKE
THAT'S FINE.
WHENEVER YOU'RE READY.
YOUR FRIENDS ARE VERY NICE, BY THE WAY. THE CROWS, I MEAN.
I CAN SEE WHY YOU WANTED TO GIVE THEM FRESH BAKERY BREAD.
I THINK THEY APPRECIATE THESE SEEDS, DON'T YOU?

THEY'RE ONLY MY FRIENDS BECAUSE I FEED THEM.
THEY'LL LEAVE WHEN I RUN OUT.
WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT?
EVERYONE LEAVES.
WHO HAS LEFT YOU?
MY MUM. MY SCHOOL FRIENDS. PAPA.
HE WANTS ME TO GO TO THE DARK PLACE AND NEVER COME BACK.
SIGH...AND BECAUSE I'M A STUPID GHOST NOW, PEOPLE CAN'T SEE ME ANYMORE.
EDGAR AND THE OTHER CROWS ARE THE ONLY ONES LEFT. IF THEY GO AWAY...
NO ONE WILL BE MY FRIEND EVER AGAIN.

NEVER AGAIN?
THAT'S AN AWFULLY LONG TIME.
MMPH.
WELL. I CAN SEE YOU. COULD I BE YOUR FRIEND?
WHY, SO YOU CAN GET THE DUMB KEY BACK AND LEAVE ME, TOO?
CAW...
YOU'RE RIGHT. I WOULD LIKE THAT KEY BACK.
BUT ALSO BECAUSE...
...YOU REMIND ME OF A GIRL I USED TO KNOW.

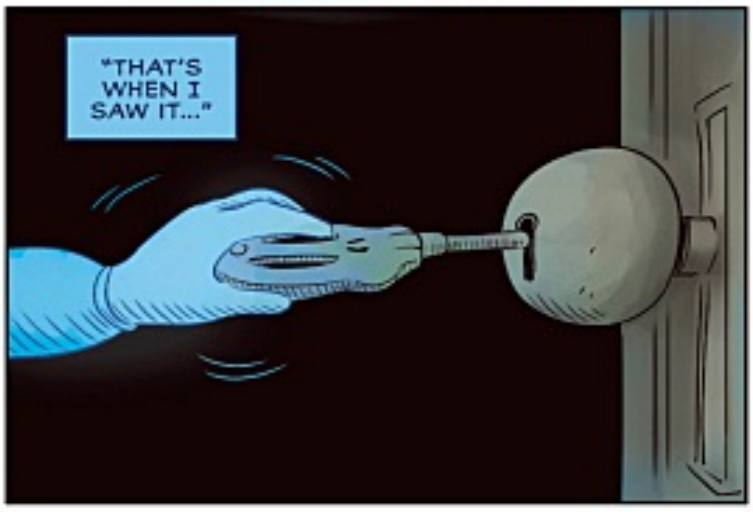
SHE KNEW EXACTLY WHAT SHE WANTED, AND SHE DID NOT WAIT FOR PERMISSION TO DO THE THINGS SHE WANTED TO DO.
I ADMIRE THAT ABOUT BOTH OF YOU.
I'M SORRY ABOUT HOW I HANDLED OUR FIRST ENCOUNTER, LUCY. I WAS SO FOCUSED ON GETTING THE KEY, AND WASN'T VERY CONSIDERATE OF YOUR FEELINGS.
BUT THAT KEY IS VERY IMPORTANT. WITHOUT IT, A LOT OF GHOSTS JUST LIKE MY FRIEND WILL BE TRAPPED IN THE LIVING WORLD.
THEY'RE SCARED, AND CONFUSED, AND THEY REALLY NEED YOUR HELP TO PUT THE KEY BACK IN DEATH'S DOOR.
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! THERE WAS A BEASTIE IN THE DOOR, AND IT WAS GOING TO HURT ME!
BUT YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT THAT, DO YOU?! NO ONE CARES HOW I FEEL!
SO I HAVE TO GO BACK AND GET EATEN BY THE THREE-EYED BEASTIE, ALL BECAUSE PAPA, A LOONY GHOST DOCTOR, AND SOME OTHER GHOSTS I'VE NEVER MET SAY SO??
YOU'RE JUST LIKE HIM. PAPA WAS ALWAYS TELLING ME WHAT TO DO, TOO.
"STAY IN YOUR ROOM, LUCY!" "NO CRITTERS ALLOWED INSIDE, LUCY!"
"TAKE YOUR MEDICINE AND NEVER GO OUT, EVER IN YOUR LIFE!"
PAPA DIDN'T CARE WHAT I WANTED TO DO, BECAUSE HE WANTED ME TO STAY IN BED ALL DAY, LIKE A WEE DOLLY!
TELL ME MORE ABOUT THAT.

"THE NIGHT THAT I...D-DIED...PAPA TOLD ME HE WOULD FOLLOW ME.
"HE SAID HE WOULD GO ON A JOURNEY WITH ME TO A MAGICAL PLACE. AND WE WOULD WALK TO DEATH'S DOOR...TOGETHER."

"BUT WHEN I OPENED MY EYES...PAPA WASN'T THERE.
"I WAS ALL ALONE, IN A DARK, MUDDY PLACE FULL OF WHISPERS AND STARLIGHT."

"SO I WALKED AND WALKED, HOPING I'D FIND HIM SOMEWHERE...
"INSTEAD, I FOUND A BIG STONE DOOR."

"...THE THREE-EYED BEASTIE."


"THAT'S WHEN I SAW IT..."

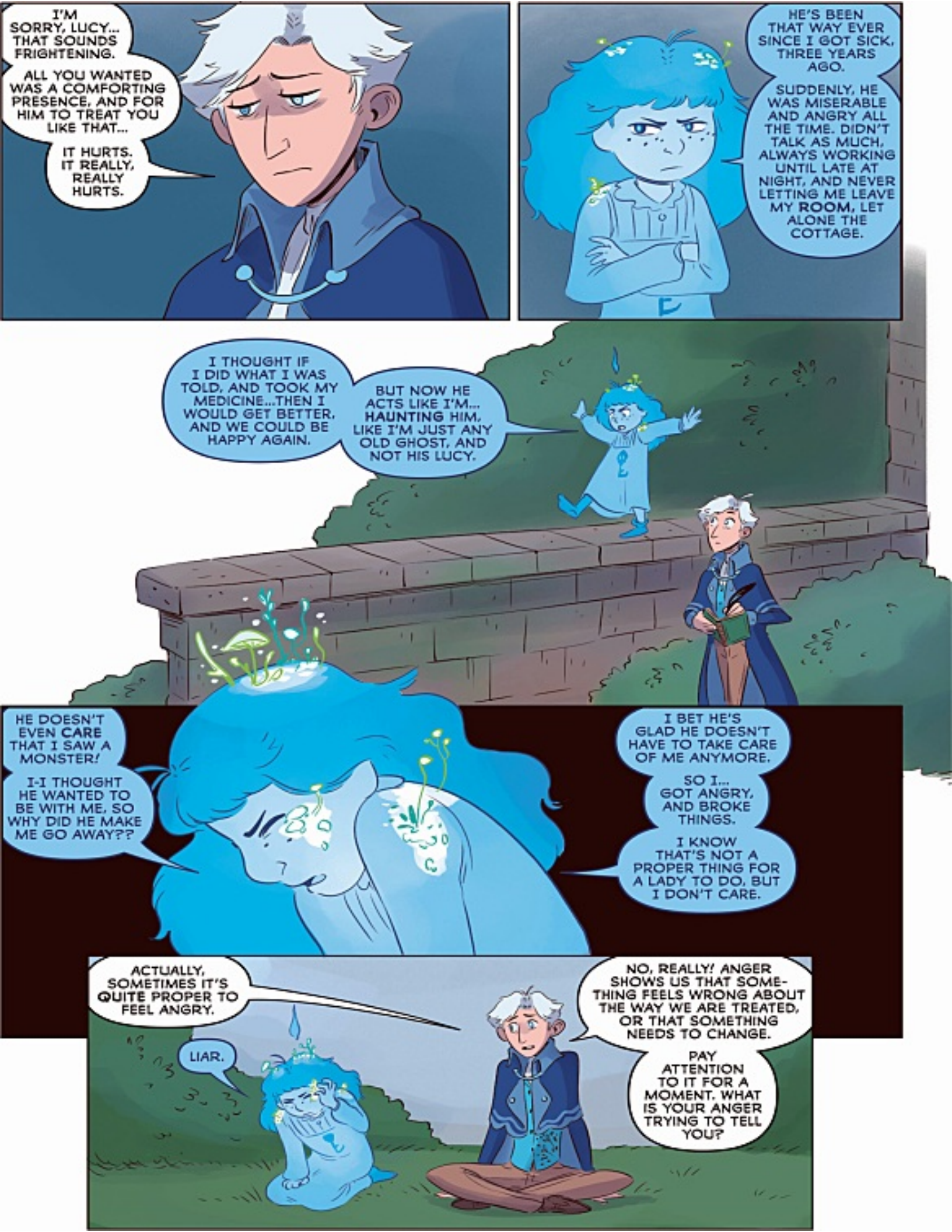
"AND I..."

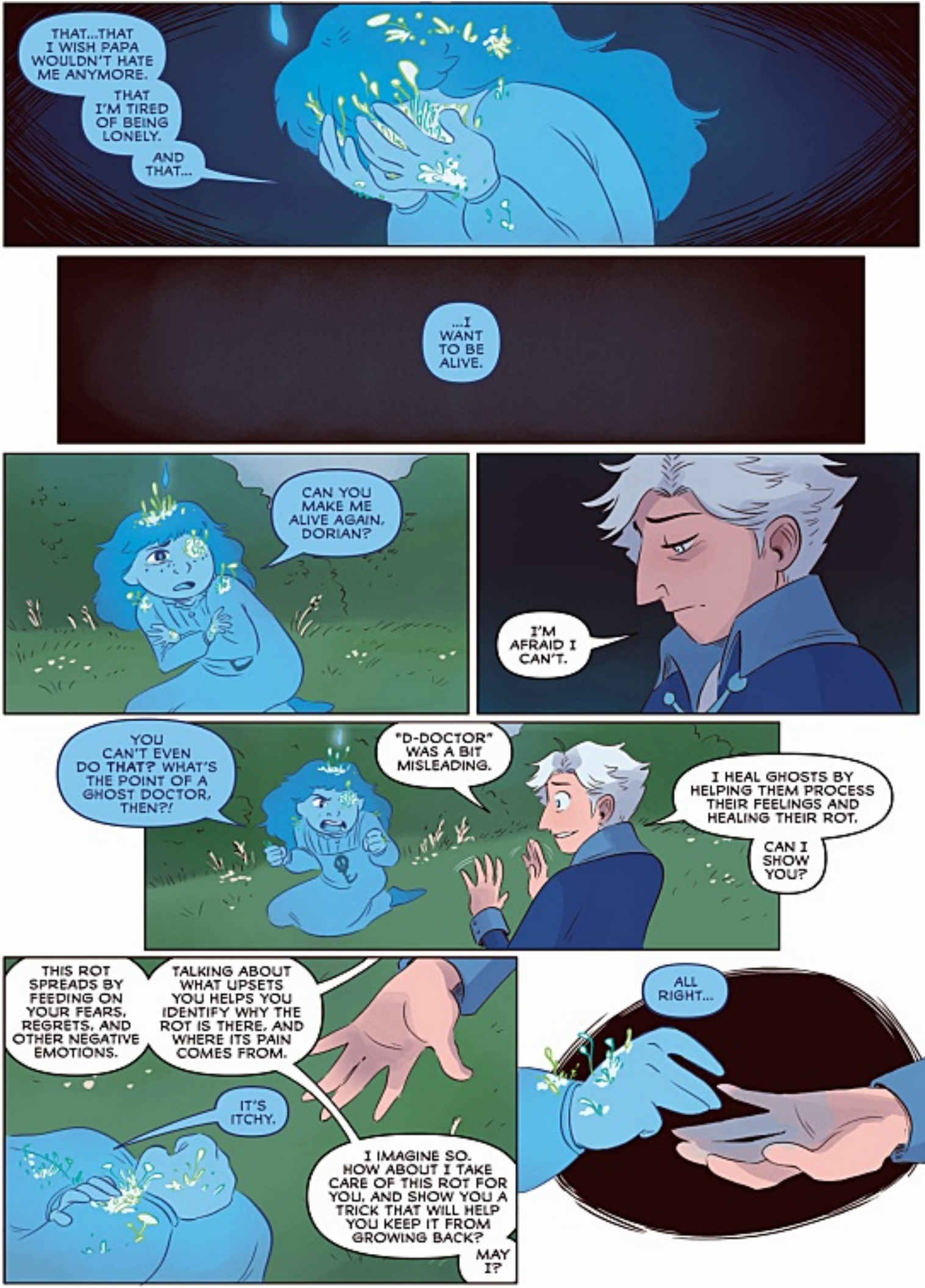
SLAM!
CLICK

...I WOKE UP OUTSIDE OUR COTTAGE. I WAS STILL A GHOST, BUT I WAS SO HAPPY TO BE AWAKE AND OUT OF THAT HORRIBLE PLACE. IT ALL FELT LIKE A BAD DREAM.

BUT EVEN THOUGH I CAME BACK...EVEN THOUGH I WASN'T SICK ANYMORE... PAPA WASN'T HAPPY TO SEE ME AT ALL.

HE THREW SALT AT ME, AND TOLD ME TO LEAVE.


I'M SORRY, LUCY... THAT SOUNDS FRIGHTENING.
ALL YOU WANTED WAS A COMFORTING PRESENCE, AND FOR HIM TO TREAT YOU LIKE THAT...
IT HURTS. IT REALLY, REALLY HURTS.
HE'S BEEN THAT WAY EVER SINCE I GOT SICK, THREE YEARS AGO.
SUDDENLY, HE WAS MISERABLE AND ANGRY ALL THE TIME. DIDN'T TALK AS MUCH, ALWAYS WORKING UNTIL LATE AT NIGHT, AND NEVER LETTING ME LEAVE MY ROOM, LET ALONE THE COTTAGE.
I THOUGHT IF I DID WHAT I WAS TOLD, AND TOOK MY MEDICINE...THEN I WOULD GET BETTER, AND WE COULD BE HAPPY AGAIN.
BUT NOW HE ACTS LIKE I'M... HAUNTING HIM, LIKE I'M JUST ANY OLD GHOST, AND NOT HIS LUCY.
HE DOESN'T EVEN CARE THAT I SAW A MONSTER!
I-I THOUGHT HE WANTED TO BE WITH ME, SO WHY DID HE MAKE ME GO AWAY??
I BET HE'S GLAD HE DOESN'T HAVE TO TAKE CARE OF ME ANYMORE.
SO I... GOT ANGRY, AND BROKE THINGS.
I KNOW THAT'S NOT A PROPER THING FOR A LADY TO DO, BUT I DON'T CARE.
ACTUALLY, SOMETIMES IT'S QUITE PROPER TO FEEL ANGRY.
LIAR.
NO, REALLY! ANGER SHOWS US THAT SOMETHING FEELS WRONG ABOUT THE WAY WE ARE TREATED, OR THAT SOMETHING NEEDS TO CHANGE.
PAY ATTENTION TO IT FOR A MOMENT. WHAT IS YOUR ANGER TRYING TO TELL YOU?


THAT...THAT I WISH PAPA WOULDN'T HATE ME ANYMORE.
THAT I'M TIRED OF BEING LONELY.
AND THAT...
...I WANT TO BE ALIVE.
CAN YOU MAKE ME ALIVE AGAIN, DORIAN?
I'M AFRAID I CAN'T.
YOU CAN'T EVEN DO THAT? WHAT'S THE POINT OF A GHOST DOCTOR, THEN?!
"D-DOCTOR" WAS A BIT MISLEADING.
I HEAL GHOSTS BY HELPING THEM PROCESS THEIR FEELINGS AND HEALING THEIR ROT.
CAN I SHOW YOU?
THIS ROT SPREADS BY FEEDING ON YOUR FEARS, REGRETS, AND OTHER NEGATIVE EMOTIONS.
TALKING ABOUT WHAT UPSETS YOU HELPS YOU IDENTIFY WHY THE ROT IS THERE, AND WHERE ITS PAIN COMES FROM.
IT'S ITCHY.
I IMAGINE SO. HOW ABOUT I TAKE CARE OF THIS ROT FOR YOU, AND SHOW YOU A TRICK THAT WILL HELP YOU KEEP IT FROM GROWING BACK? MAY I?
ALL RIGHT...

WHOA... YOUR HAND FEELS LIKE A HAND!
I-I MEAN, I DON'T PASS THROUGH!
YES. GHOSTS CAN ONLY TOUCH THE LIVING WHEN THEY'RE GIVEN PERMISSION TO, YOU SEE.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT *COPING* MEANS, LUCY?
NO.
*COPING* IS THE LITTLE DECISIONS WE MAKE THAT GIVE US OUR CONTROL BACK.
WHEN YOU FEED THE CROWS, YOU GIVE THEM SOMETHING THEY LIKE, AND IN RETURN, THEY SPEND TIME WITH YOU.
HOW DOES IT MAKE YOU FEEL?
GOOD.
THAT SMALL, GOOD FEELING CREATES HOPE THAT EVERYTHING IS GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT.
THAT THERE ARE LITTLE THINGS THAT YOU CAN DO...
TO HELP YOU HEAL YOUR OWN ROT.
BUT SOMETIMES IT'S NICE TO HAVE A LITTLE HELP.

YOU'RE NICE. I WISH I HAD KNOWN SOMEONE LIKE YOU WHEN I WAS STILL... BEFORE I WAS A GHOST.
IF YOU TEACH ME MORE WAYS TO COPE, THEN I'LL THINK ABOUT, MAYBE, GIVING THE KEY BACK.
BUT I'M NOT GOING BACK TO THAT LIMBO PLACE. I'M STAYING HERE.
WELL, "HERE" ISN'T A LOVELY PLACE FOR A GHOST, AT THE MOMENT.
FOLLOW ME.
IF YOU'RE GOING TO REMAIN HERE, I'LL NEED TO KEEP YOU AWAY FROM THE EXORCISTS: THE PEOPLE WEARING BLACK BEAK MASKS.
YOU CAN STAY WITH ME AT THE BOOK ROOK.
WHY ARE YOU HELPING ME?
BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS DO...
THE BOOK ROOK
...AND I FEEL LIKE YOU COULD USE A FRIEND RIGHT NOW.

HAVE A GOOD EVENING, MA'AM!
PSST, DORIAN'S GRAN.
PARDON ME. IF YOU'RE HAUNTING THIS ROOM PRESENTLY, COULD YOU PUT THIS BOOK BACK FOR ME?
HISTORICALS. THIRD SHELF BY THE READING NOOK. PLEASE AND TH-
SNATCH!
TH-THHAAAAANNNNNK YOU.
BRODY? GRAN?
CLOSED
THIS IS LUCY.
SHE WILL BE MAKING SCONES WITH US TONIGHT.
WELCOME LUCY!

AH, I'M... ASSUMING SHE'S BY THE FLOATING BROLLY? NICE TO MEET YOU, LUCY! I'M BRODY.
...CHARMED, I'M SURE.
LUCY, THIS IS BRODY. HE RUNS THE BOOKSHOP. THAT'S MY GRAN, LAZARUS. SHE ADVISES AND HELPS BOOKKEEP FOR MY BUSINESS WITH THE GHOSTS.
H-HELLO.
WOULD YOU MIND WEARING THIS CAP, SO BRODY CAN SEE WHERE YOU ARE?
ALL RIGHT.
GO AHEAD UPSTAIRS.
WELL, THEN? DID YOU CONVINCE HER TO PUT THE KEY BACK?
I'M WORKING ON IT.
AND HOW IS MAKING SCONES, "WORKING ON IT"? YOU'VE CLEARLY CURED HER ROT, SO GET HER TO SLEEP AND SEND HER ON HER WAY!
SHE'S A LONELY, SCARED LITTLE GIRL, AND LIFE WASN'T KIND TO HER. SHE NEEDS SOME POSITIVE MORTAL EXPERIENCES TO TAKE BACK WITH HER INTO THE NEXT LIFE, OR THE ROT WILL JUST COME BACK.
SHE'LL RETURN THE KEY WHEN SHE'S READY.
WHEN SHE'S **READY**? EVERY GHOST IS STUCK HERE BECAUSE OF HER! SHE NEEDS TO BE DISCIPLINED!
SHE NEEDS A **FRIEND**, GRANDMOTHER.
HER OWN CARETAKER WAS PERFECTLY POSITIONED TO HELP HER, AND INSTEAD HE SENT HER AWAY!
DOESN'T THAT **REMIND** YOU OF ANYONE?

I UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE GETTING AT, BUT YOUR ONLY CRIME WAS TALKING TO GHOSTS.
BESIDES, YOU'RE MY GRANDSON. I WASN'T ABOUT TO LET YOUR PARENTS SEND YOU OFF TO SOME–
PLEASE TRUST ME ON THIS, GRAN.
I APPRECIATE YOUR CONCERN, BUT I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING.
VERY WELL. JUST DON'T LOSE SIGHT OF WHAT THIS IS ALL FOR.
I WON'T.
OH!
HOW IS IT, LUCY?
IT... DOESN'T TASTE LIKE ANYTHING.
I CAN'T TASTE THE STRAWBERRIES, EITHER!
OF COURSE NOT, DEAR. GHOSTS CANNOT TASTE THINGS.
EATING IS JUST A FORMALITY NOW.
BUT...BUT I'VE NEVER HAD A SCONE BEFORE.
I W-WANTED TO KNOW WHAT IT TASTED LIKE...

WELL, IT IS WHAT IT IS.
IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, THEN PERHAPS YOU'D BE MORE COMFORTABLE IN LIMBO.
NO, I'M NEVER GOING BACK THERE! IT'S SCARY!
IF YOU JUST WENT THROUGH DEATH'S DOOR WHEN YOU HAD THE CHANCE, MAYBE IT WOULDN'T BE AS SCARY!
HOW DO YOU KNOW?!
IT HAS TO BE! WHY WOULD IT EXIST AT ALL, IF IT WERE A WORSE PLACE THAN HERE??
BUT THE THREE-EYED BEASTIE LIVES THERE, AND THERE COULD BE OTHER MONSTERS, TOO! LIKE THE KIND THAT EAT BAD CHILDREN WHO DON'T DO THEIR CHORES!
THERE ARE NO MONSTERS, YOU BELLIGERENT CHILD! YOU IMAGINED THEM.
IF YOU'RE SO BRAVE, WHY DON'T YOU GO OPEN DEATH'S DOOR, THEN?!
SNAP!

I WON'T SEE ANY MONSTERS IN LIMBO...
BECAUSE MONSTERS ONLY APPEAR TO THE BAD CHILDREN, WHO LIE AND MAKE UP STORIES.
SLAM!
LUCY, WAIT!
...DID I MISS SOMETHING?

Y-YOU...
YOU BELIEVE ME... DON'T YOU, DORIAN?

LUCY, I-

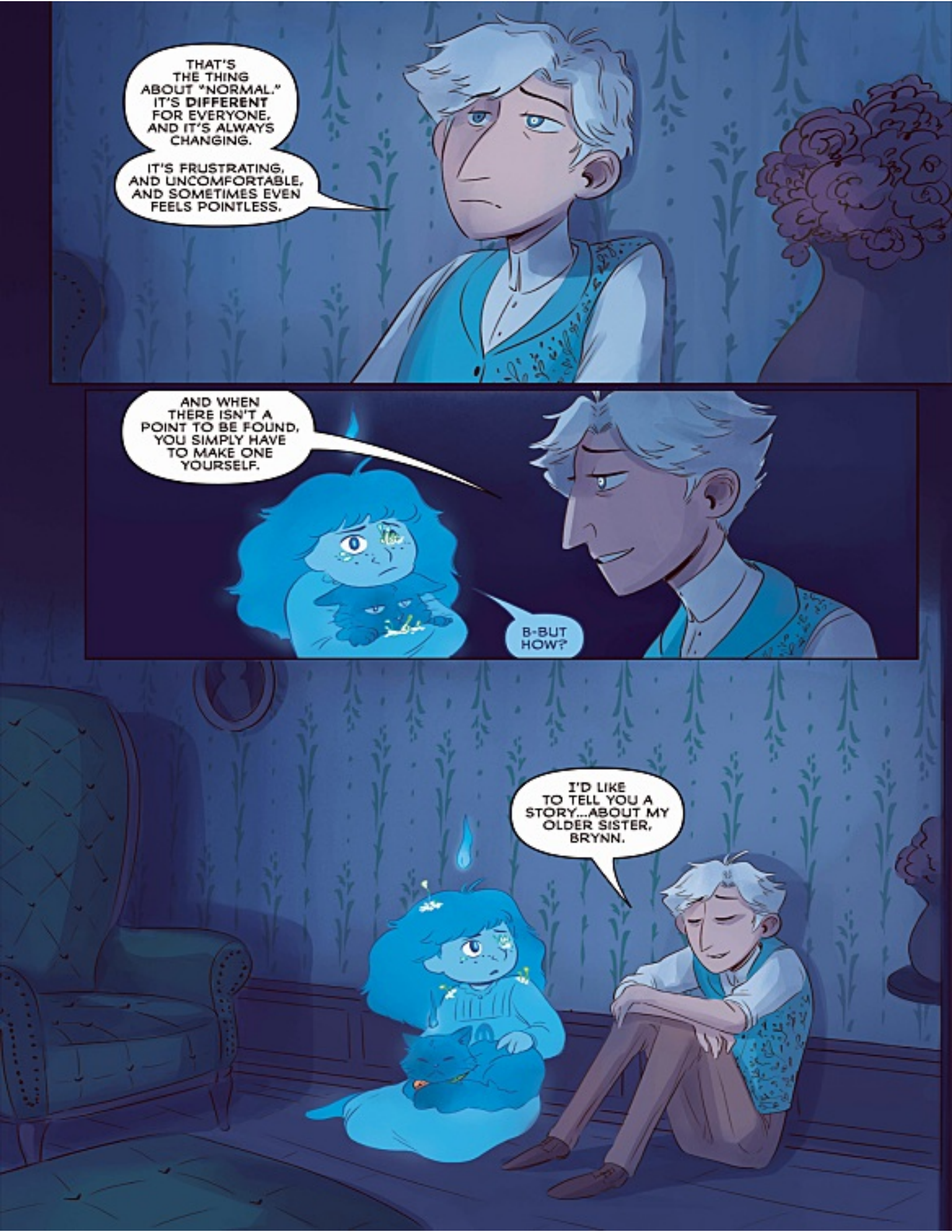
I'M NOT A LIAR!! I REALLY DID SEE A MONSTER, HONEST!

WHY IS THIS HAPPENING TO ME?! IT FEELS LIKE I'M NOT REAL ANYMORE!
I WANT THINGS TO GO BACK TO NORMAL!

I'M AFRAID THIS IS NORMAL NOW.

NO, NO!! I WANT TO GO BACK TO THE WAY THINGS WERE, WHEN I WAS ALIVE!
I DON'T WANT TO BE A GHOST! I DON'T WANT TO GO BACK TO DEATH'S DOOR!
I KNOW...
TH-THIS ISN'T F-FAIR...
I KNOW...

W-WAS YOUR GRANNY RIGHT? WAS I A BAD CHILD, AND THAT'S WHY PAPA TURNED ME AWAY... AND WHY I SAW THE BEASTIE WHEN I...?
I DIDN'T MEAN TO BE BAD...I JUST... WANTED ANOTHER CHANCE...
IF I DON'T GET ANOTHER CHANCE...WHAT WAS THE POINT OF ALL OF THIS, THEN?
WHY DID I LIVE AT ALL, ONLY TO...
ONLY TO...
MMMRH.
JINGLE!
BUMP
PURRRRRRRRR...


THAT'S THE THING ABOUT "NORMAL." IT'S DIFFERENT FOR EVERYONE, AND IT'S ALWAYS CHANGING.
IT'S FRUSTRATING, AND UNCOMFORTABLE, AND SOMETIMES EVEN FEELS POINTLESS.
AND WHEN THERE ISN'T A POINT TO BE FOUND, YOU SIMPLY HAVE TO MAKE ONE YOURSELF.
B-BUT HOW?
I'D LIKE TO TELL YOU A STORY...ABOUT MY OLDER SISTER, BRYNN.

"SHE WAS ABOUT YOUR AGE, AND I WAS FIVE. WE WERE PLAYING IN THE RIVER, AND MY MOTHER WATCHED US FROM THE SHORE.
CRACK!
"I REMEMBER... FALLING."
CRAAASH!

"BRYNN JUMPED IN AFTER ME.
"I'M...NOT SURE HOW LONG WE WERE IN THE WATER.
"BUT WHEN I OPENED MY EYES, BRYNN WAS GONE."
"IT WAS JUST ME...
"...AND A DOOR.
SHK!
"AND THEN..."
CREEEEAK...

"THE LAST THING I REMEMBER IS...
"A SOFT, FEATHERY THING PULLING ME AWAY FROM THE DOOR..."

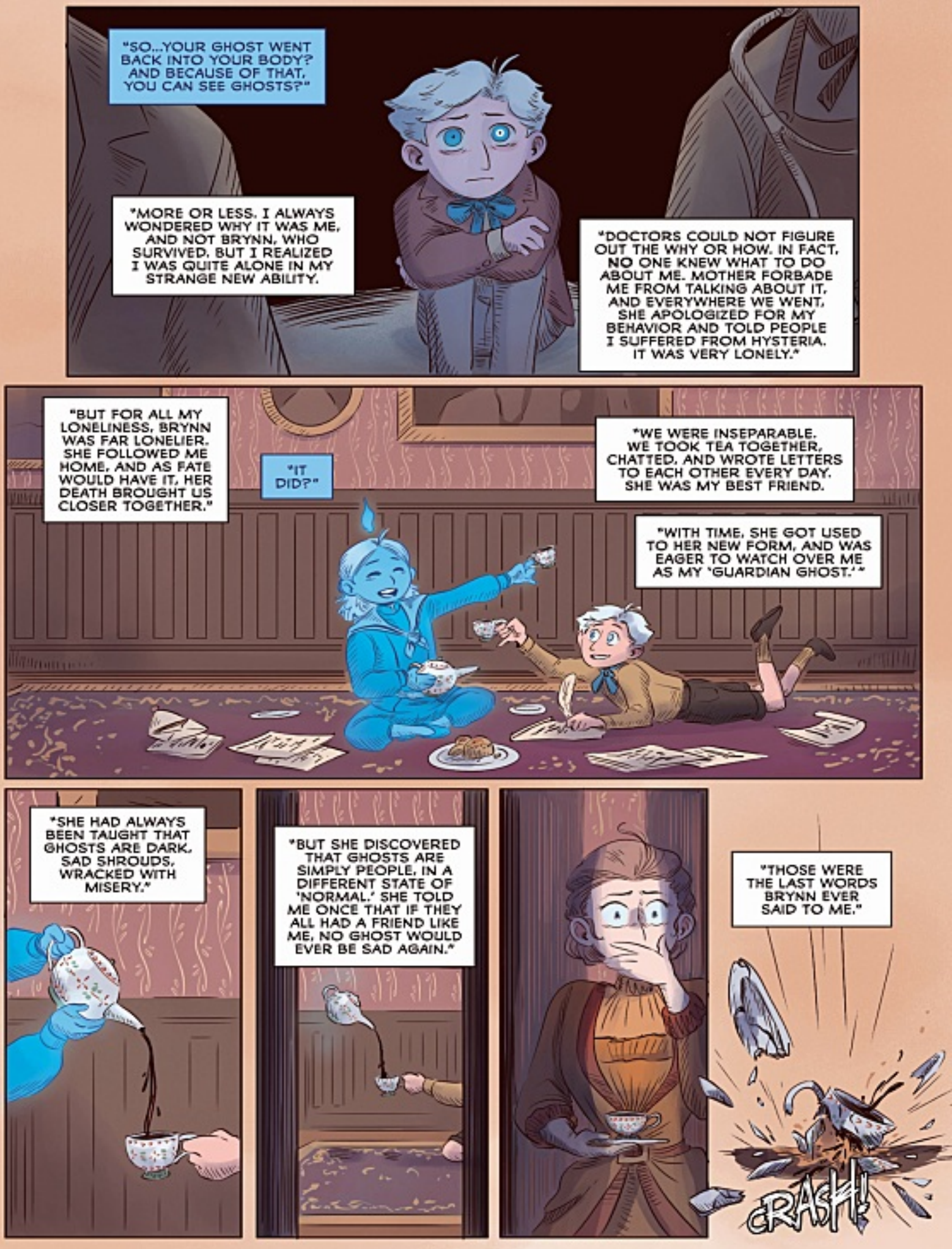
"...AND MY GRANDMOTHER'S HAND, REACHING OUT FOR ME."

"WAS IT THE BEASTIE, TRYING TO SWALLOW YOU WITH ITS FEATHERS??"
"THE MEMORY IS HAZY, BUT NO...EVEN AT FIVE, I CERTAINLY WOULD HAVE REMEMBERED SEEING A BEASTIE.
"PERHAPS IT WAS HOW MY MIND INTERPRETED THE MEMORY OF MY MOTHER'S SLEEVES, PULLING ME OUT OF THE WATER."

"I REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS ON THE RIVERBANK..."
GASP! COUGH, HACK!

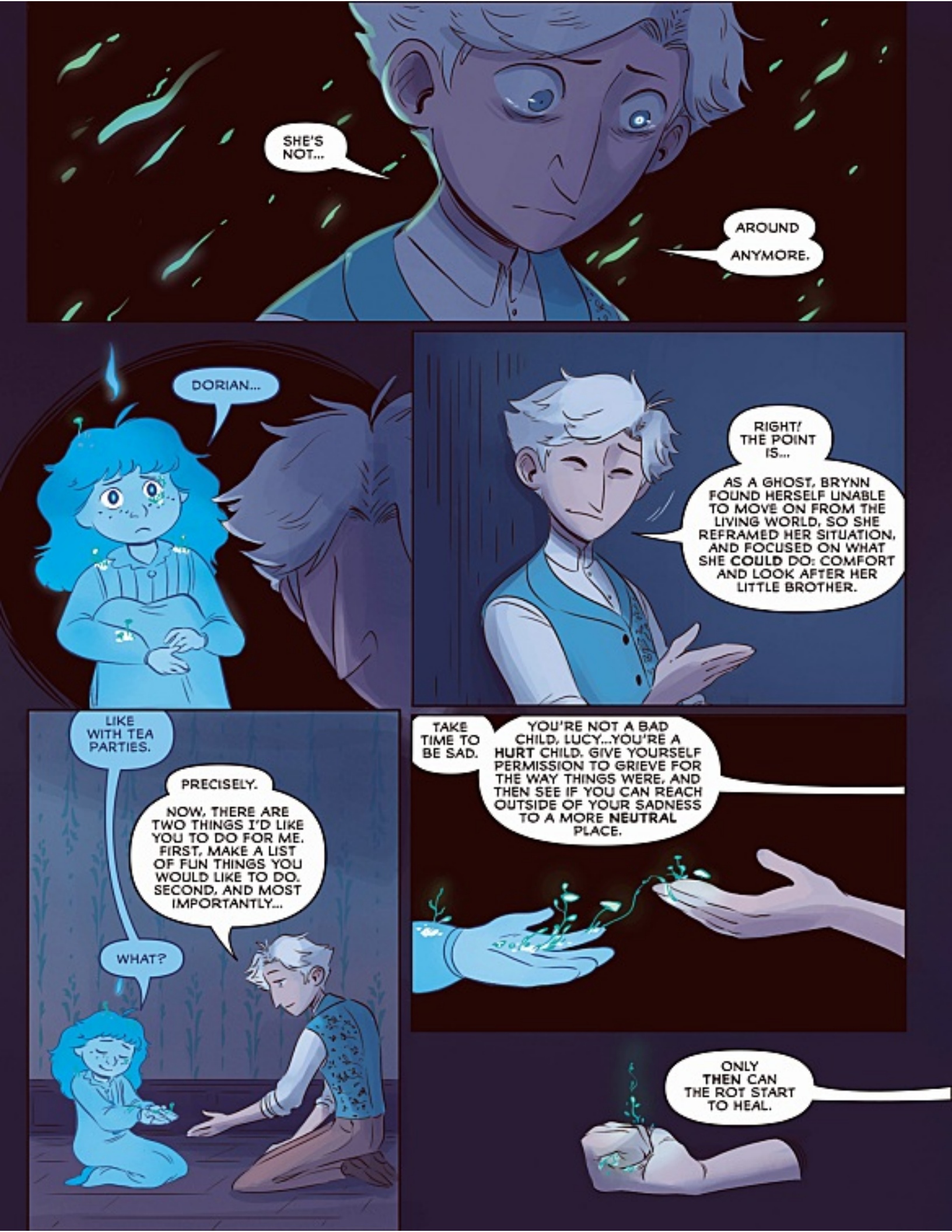
"AND BRYNN CAME BACK..."

"...AS A GHOST."


"SO...YOUR GHOST WENT BACK INTO YOUR BODY? AND BECAUSE OF THAT, YOU CAN SEE GHOSTS?"
"MORE OR LESS. I ALWAYS WONDERED WHY IT WAS ME, AND NOT BRYNN, WHO SURVIVED. BUT I REALIZED I WAS QUITE ALONE IN MY STRANGE NEW ABILITY.
"DOCTORS COULD NOT FIGURE OUT THE WHY OR HOW. IN FACT, NO ONE KNEW WHAT TO DO ABOUT ME. MOTHER FORBADE ME FROM TALKING ABOUT IT, AND EVERYWHERE WE WENT, SHE APOLOGIZED FOR MY BEHAVIOR AND TOLD PEOPLE I SUFFERED FROM HYSTERIA. IT WAS VERY LONELY."
"BUT FOR ALL MY LONELINESS, BRYNN WAS FAR LONELIER. SHE FOLLOWED ME HOME, AND AS FATE WOULD HAVE IT, HER DEATH BROUGHT US CLOSER TOGETHER."
"IT DID?"
"WE WERE INSEPARABLE. WE TOOK TEA TOGETHER, CHATTED, AND WROTE LETTERS TO EACH OTHER EVERY DAY. SHE WAS MY BEST FRIEND.
"WITH TIME, SHE GOT USED TO HER NEW FORM, AND WAS EAGER TO WATCH OVER ME AS MY 'GUARDIAN GHOST.'"
"SHE HAD ALWAYS BEEN TAUGHT THAT GHOSTS ARE DARK, SAD SHROUDS, WRACKED WITH MISERY."
"BUT SHE DISCOVERED THAT GHOSTS ARE SIMPLY PEOPLE, IN A DIFFERENT STATE OF 'NORMAL.' SHE TOLD ME ONCE THAT IF THEY ALL HAD A FRIEND LIKE ME, NO GHOST WOULD EVER BE SAD AGAIN."
"THOSE WERE THE LAST WORDS BRYNN EVER SAID TO ME."
CRASH!

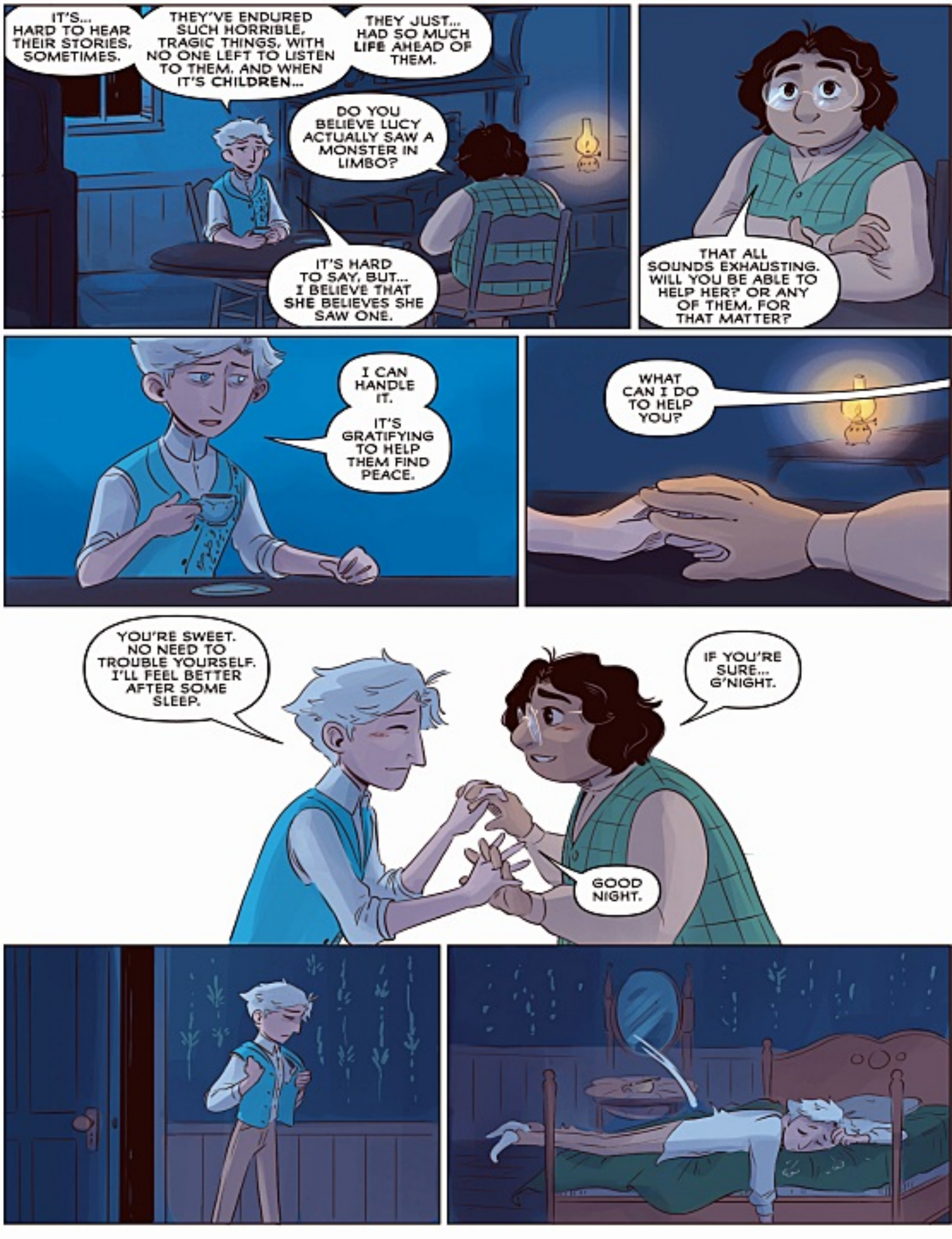
"HOW COME?"
HEXOCRINE
Impound No. 2

AAAIIIEEEEEEEE!!
"...DORIAN?"


SHE'S NOT...
AROUND ANYMORE.
DORIAN...
RIGHT! THE POINT IS...
AS A GHOST, BRYNN FOUND HERSELF UNABLE TO MOVE ON FROM THE LIVING WORLD, SO SHE REFRAMED HER SITUATION, AND FOCUSED ON WHAT SHE COULD DO: COMFORT AND LOOK AFTER HER LITTLE BROTHER.
LIKE WITH TEA PARTIES.
PRECISELY.
NOW, THERE ARE TWO THINGS I'D LIKE YOU TO DO FOR ME. FIRST, MAKE A LIST OF FUN THINGS YOU WOULD LIKE TO DO. SECOND, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY...
WHAT?
TAKE TIME TO BE SAD.
YOU'RE NOT A BAD CHILD, LUCY...YOU'RE A HURT CHILD. GIVE YOURSELF PERMISSION TO GRIEVE FOR THE WAY THINGS WERE, AND THEN SEE IF YOU CAN REACH OUTSIDE OF YOUR SADNESS TO A MORE NEUTRAL PLACE.
ONLY THEN CAN THE ROT START TO HEAL.

BUT...BUT I DON'T WANT TO BE SAD OR NEUTRAL.
I WANT TO BE HAPPY.
YOU CERTAINLY DESERVE TO BE HAPPY.
BUT GOING STRAIGHT FROM SAD TO HAPPY ISN'T EASY TO DO.
THAT'S LIKE TRYING TO CLIMB A STAIRCASE FROM BOTTOM TO TOP IN A SINGLE JUMP!
AND HOW DO YOU CLIMB A STAIRCASE?
PRECISELY.
ONE STEP AT A TIME.
JINGLE!
SLUNK
ONE STEP, ONE MOMENT AT A TIME...
YOU'LL GET THERE.
JINGLE, JINGLE, JINGLE

EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT?
I THINK SO, YES. COULD LUCY STAY HERE TONIGHT?
I WANT TO READ THE BOOKS.
SHE WANTS TO READ THE BOOKS, PLEASE.
PLEASE.
JINGLE, JING
SURE. JUST HAVE HER PUT THEM BACK WHEN SHE'S DONE, EH?
YOU ALL RIGHT?
YES, THE GHOSTS ARE IN FINE HEALTH NOW.
THAT'S ALL WELL AND GOOD... BUT ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, DORIAN?
I'M...
...I...


IT'S... HARD TO HEAR THEIR STORIES, SOMETIMES.
THEY'VE ENDURED SUCH HORRIBLE, TRAGIC THINGS, WITH NO ONE LEFT TO LISTEN TO THEM. AND WHEN IT'S CHILDREN...
THEY JUST... HAD SO MUCH LIFE AHEAD OF THEM.
DO YOU BELIEVE LUCY ACTUALLY SAW A MONSTER IN LIMBO?
IT'S HARD TO SAY, BUT... I BELIEVE THAT SHE BELIEVES SHE SAW ONE.
THAT ALL SOUNDS EXHAUSTING. WILL YOU BE ABLE TO HELP HER? OR ANY OF THEM, FOR THAT MATTER?
I CAN HANDLE IT.
IT'S GRATIFYING TO HELP THEM FIND PEACE.
WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP YOU?
YOU'RE SWEET. NO NEED TO TROUBLE YOURSELF. I'LL FEEL BETTER AFTER SOME SLEEP.
IF YOU'RE SURE... G'NIGHT.
GOOD NIGHT.

:SNIFF:
DORIAN! WAKE UP!
:MMF: W-WHAT IS IT...?
FINALLY.
I DO HOPE YOU SAVED SOME ROOM ON YOUR SCHEDULE FOR YOUR OWN GRAN.
I WAS SLEEPING, GRAN. IT'S BEEN A LONG DAY.
YOU CAN SLEEP LATER. LOOK AT THIS!
WHAT AM I LOOKING AT?
MY ROT! IT'S GROWN BACK AGAIN.
BE A DEAR AND TAKE CARE OF IT, LIKE YOU DID WITH OWEN'S?

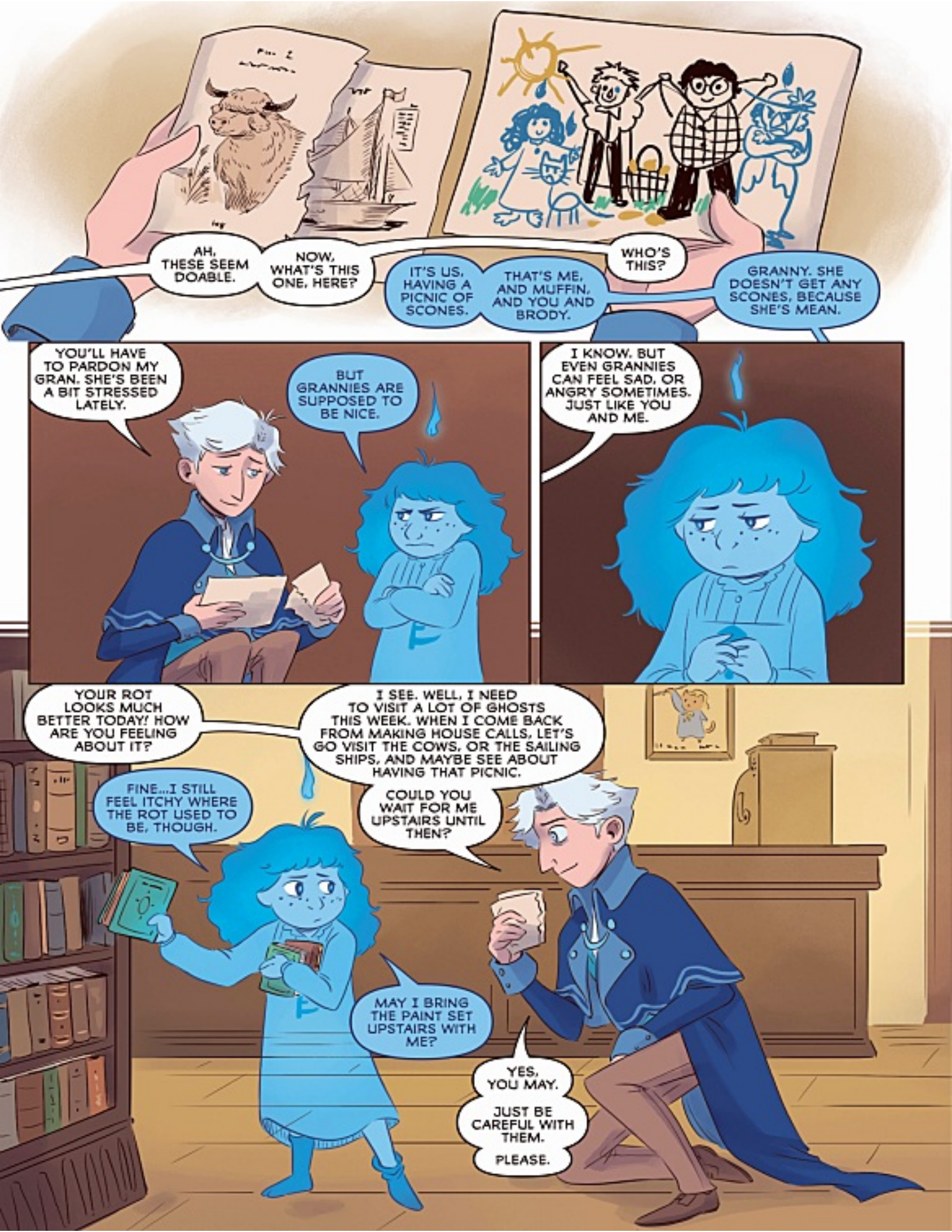
WOULD IT BE ALL RIGHT TO WAIT UNTIL TOMORROW?
I'M NOT EXACTLY FEELING MY BEST AT THE MOMENT.
WELL, NEITHER AM I! YOU MADE TIME FOR EVERYONE ELSE TODAY. YOU EVEN SPENT EXTRA TIME WITH THAT LITTLE URCHIN!
I'M FAMILY. WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO WAIT ANOTHER DAY?!
I'M NOT TRYING TO SHRUG YOU OFF, GRAN. IT'S JUST–
LOOK, DORIE, A BUSINESS LIKE THIS REQUIRES SOME SACRIFICES. I UNDERSTAND THAT BETTER THAN ANYONE. I RAN MY OWN BUSINESS IN LIFE, AFTER ALL!
BUT WHEN YOUR FAMILY IS HURTING, THAT MUST BE YOUR TOP PRIORITY!
GRAN–
I SAVED YOU FROM BEING SENT OFF TO SOME DREADFUL PLACE, AND RISKED GETTING EXORCISED BY MY OWN SON, BECAUSE I CARE ABOUT YOU, AND I WANT YOU TO SUCCEED.
NOW, I'M NOT ASKING FOR THANKS OR PRAISE. I'VE JUST BEEN FEELING NEGLECTED, IS ALL, AND WOULD LIKE TO BE SHOWN SOME CARE IN RETURN.
I UNDERSTAND. TH-THANK YOU. EHM...
I WOULD JUST...VERY MUCH LIKE TO SLEEP FIRST, SO–
AND I WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO BE HEALED.
SHOULDN'T YOU THINK LESS ABOUT YOURSELF,
AND MORE ABOUT THE PEOPLE WHO NEED YOU?

I'M... SORRY.
YOU'RE RIGHT.

FORGIVE ME, GRAN. I DIDN'T MEAN TO BE SELFISH.
I CAN MAKE TIME TONIGHT.

THANK YOU, DEAR BOY.
WHAT WOULD I DO WITHOUT YOU?

MORNING, LUCY! HAVE YOU MADE A LIST FOR ME?
LIVE AT THE TWILIGHT THEATRE
BETTER THAN THAT! I FOUND PICTURES IN SOME BOOKS OF WHAT I WANT TO DO.
I BORROWED YOUR BRUSHES AND PAINTS, TOO. SOME OF THE BOOKS WEREN'T SPECIFIC ENOUGH.
ACK!!
OH! OH DEAR. YOU T-TORE THE PAGES OUT?!
YOU KNOW WHAT WOULD BE NICE??
CLEANING ALL OF THIS UP, BEFORE BRODY COMES DOWN.
YOU HAVEN'T LOOKED AT MY PICTURES YET.


AH, THESE SEEM DOABLE.
NOW, WHAT'S THIS ONE, HERE?
IT'S US, HAVING A PICNIC OF SCONES.
THAT'S ME, AND MUFFIN, AND YOU AND BRODY.
WHO'S THIS?
GRANNY. SHE DOESN'T GET ANY SCONES, BECAUSE SHE'S MEAN.
YOU'LL HAVE TO PARDON MY GRAN. SHE'S BEEN A BIT STRESSED LATELY.
BUT GRANNIES ARE SUPPOSED TO BE NICE.
I KNOW. BUT EVEN GRANNIES CAN FEEL SAD, OR ANGRY SOMETIMES. JUST LIKE YOU AND ME.
YOUR ROT LOOKS MUCH BETTER TODAY! HOW ARE YOU FEELING ABOUT IT?
I SEE. WELL, I NEED TO VISIT A LOT OF GHOSTS THIS WEEK. WHEN I COME BACK FROM MAKING HOUSE CALLS, LET'S GO VISIT THE COWS, OR THE SAILING SHIPS, AND MAYBE SEE ABOUT HAVING THAT PICNIC.
FINE...I STILL FEEL ITCHY WHERE THE ROT USED TO BE, THOUGH.
COULD YOU WAIT FOR ME UPSTAIRS UNTIL THEN?
MAY I BRING THE PAINT SET UPSTAIRS WITH ME?
YES, YOU MAY.
JUST BE CAREFUL WITH THEM.
PLEASE.

DORIAN, WAIT.
HM?
IT'S JUST THAT... ER...
...D-DON'T GO AWAY FOR TOO LONG.
PROMISE?
I PROMISE.

AND WHEN I GOT TO DEATH'S DOOR, IT WAS LOCKED!
WHAT WAS IT LIKE, OUT ON THE WATER?
FREEZING. WE GOT CAUGHT IN A STORM AND NEARLY SANK!
GRANDDAD WANTED ME TO GO ON ADVENTURES INSTEAD OF JUST READING ABOUT THEM, BUT NOW I SAY: AT WHAT COST??
I QUITE LIKED THE FISHING, THOUGH.
WHY MUST I KEEP SUFFERING LIKE THIS?? COULDN'T YOU SIMPLY TAKE MY ROT AWAY INSTEAD?

SURELY OUR FAMILIES ARE WAITING FOR US BEHIND DEATH'S DOOR! WHAT WILL WE DO??
LOOK, PAL, THESE "SESSIONS" ARE STARTING TO FEEL POINTLESS, IS ALL.
WHY SHOULD I BOTHER WITH MY ROT AT ALL, IF I'M GOING TO BE STUCK HERE REGARDLESS?

IS GRANNY FAMOUS? IS THAT WHY YOU GIVE HER FLOWERS ALL THE TIME?
MORGAN
SARAH KING
LAVINIA "LAZARUS" LEITH
OUR MAGICKAL MUSE

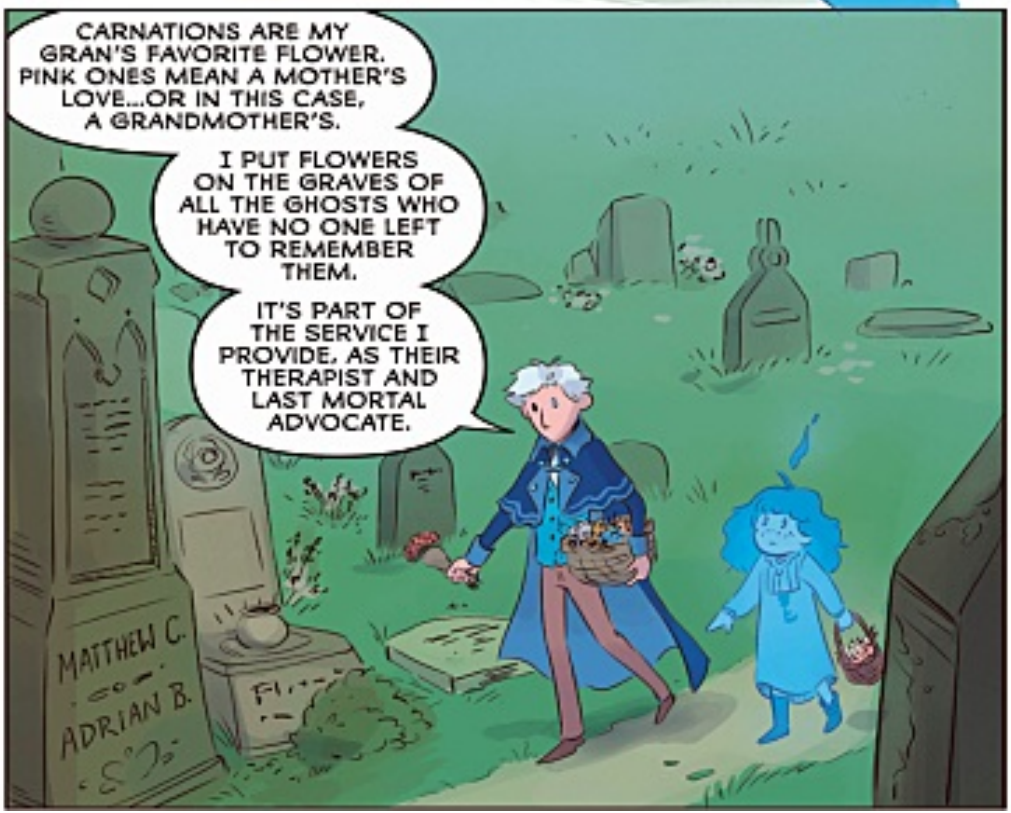
SHE WAS FAMOUS, YES. BUT IT WAS A VERY LONG TIME AGO.

GRAN WAS ALL ALONE, AND ESTRANGED FROM MY PARENTS, WHEN SHE PASSED ON.
SHE JUST FEELS FORGOTTEN FROM TIME TO TIME.
OWEN DUFFER

...SIGH...

HELLO AGAIN, MUM.
I BROUGHT YOU SOME MORE DAISIES.
Catherine Bain

DORIAN, WHAT DO DAISIES MEAN? THEY WERE MUM'S FAVORITE.
NEW BEGINNINGS, I THINK. THEY CAN ALSO MEAN INNOCENCE, OR HOPE.


CARNATIONS ARE MY GRAN'S FAVORITE FLOWER. PINK ONES MEAN A MOTHER'S LOVE...OR IN THIS CASE, A GRANDMOTHER'S.
I PUT FLOWERS ON THE GRAVES OF ALL THE GHOSTS WHO HAVE NO ONE LEFT TO REMEMBER THEM.
IT'S PART OF THE SERVICE I PROVIDE, AS THEIR THERAPIST AND LAST MORTAL ADVOCATE.
MATTHEW C.
ADRIAN B.

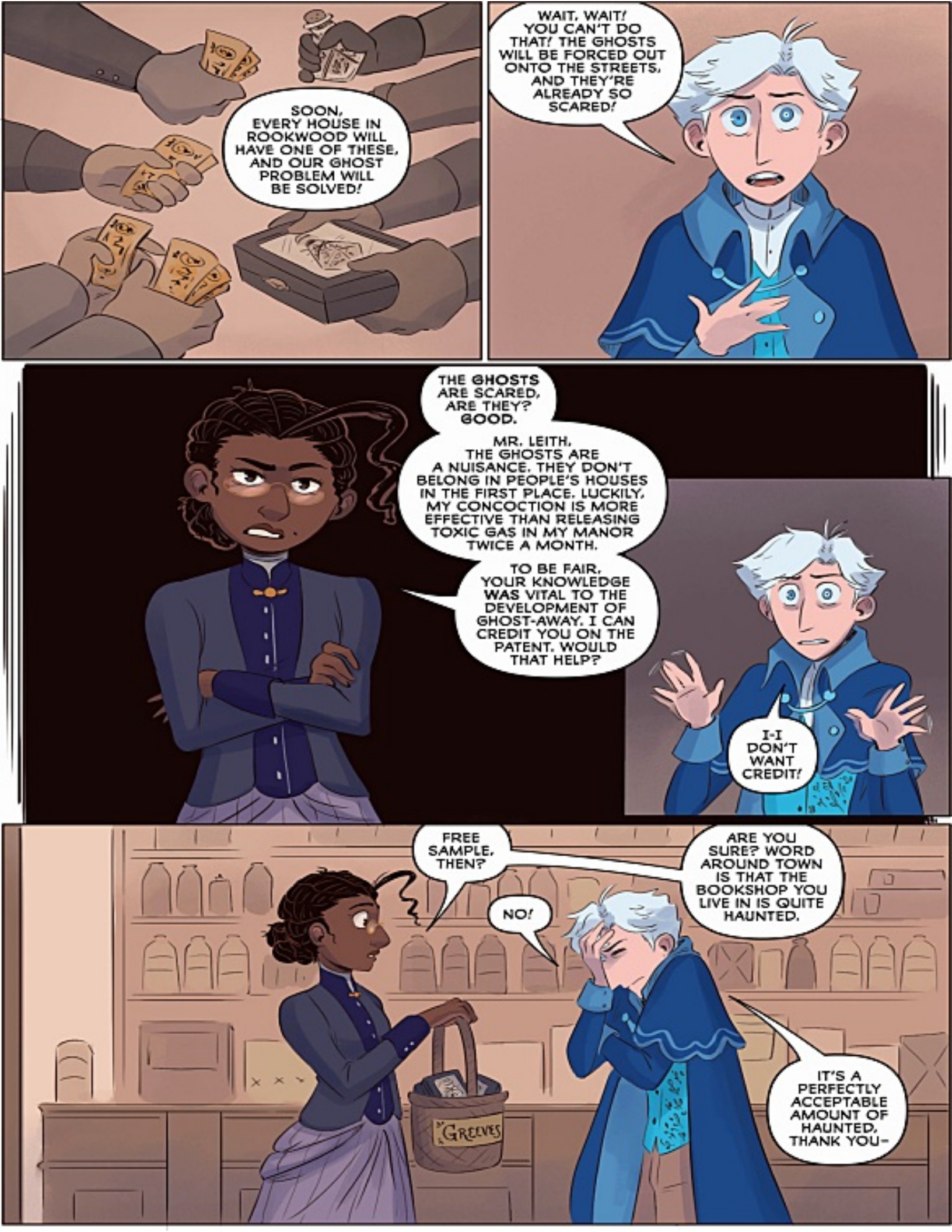
I WONDER IF I'LL BE FORGOTTEN, TOO.
DO YOU FEEL FORGOTTEN?
NOT ANYMORE, NOW THAT I HAVE DORIAN, MY NEW BEST FRIEND FOREVER!
OH, THAT'S... F-FOREVER IS A LONG TIME–
SO WHAT ARE WE DOING TOMORROW? CAN WE HAVE ANOTHER PICNIC??
OF COURSE, BUT...COULD WE TALK ABOUT THE KEY TO DEATH'S DOOR FOR A MOMENT?
IT NEEDS TO BE RETURNED, LUCY. I KNOW YOU'RE AFRAID TO GO BACK TO LIMBO, AND I WANT TO GIVE YOU PLENTY OF TIME TO HEAL AND CONSIDER IT.
BUT I THOUGHT, IN THE MEANTIME, PERHAPS YOU COULD GIVE ME THE KEY, AND I CAN SEE IF ANOTHER GHOST MIGHT BE WILLING TO RETURN IT FOR YOU?
...I CAN'T DO THAT.

THE KEY'S ALL TANGLED UP INSIDE.
I THINK IT'S ROT, BUT THE MORE I TRY TO PULL IT OUT, THE FASTER IT GROWS BACK.
PLEASE DON'T BE ANGRY!
I MEANT TO TELL YOU SOONER, BUT I HAD SO MUCH FUN WITH YOU, AND I THOUGHT THIS ROT WOULD GO AWAY ON ITS OWN!
I'M NOT ANGRY. I'M... THINKING.
IT SEEMS THAT SIMPLE COPING SKILLS AREN'T ENOUGH ANYMORE. WE NEED TO START ADDRESSING THE ROOT OF YOUR FEARS.
I THINK WE OUGHT TO TRY TALKING TO YOUR FATHER AGAIN.
NO!
I MEAN, I'M NOT READY YET!
I JUST NEED MORE TIME WITH YOU, THAT'S ALL! SO YOU CAN HELP ME COPE. THAT WILL HEAL THE ROT THIS TIME, FOR SURE!
PAPA WON'T TALK TO ME, ANYWAY. HE JUST WANTS ME TO GO AWAY. HE WANTS TO FORGET I EXIST.
BUT YOU'RE NOT LIKE THAT. YOU'RE THE OLDER BROTHER I'VE ALWAYS WANTED. YOU'VE MADE ME SO HAPPY.
DORIAN...

...YOU DON'T WANT ME TO GO AWAY, TOO... DO YOU?
NO. I DON'T.
TAKE ALL THE TIME YOU NEED.

AFTER THE SESSION HERE, I HAVE ONE WITH OWEN, AND THEN I'LL BE DONE. RUN ALONG BACK TO BOOK ROOK. I'LL SEE YOU AT SUPPER.
THISTLEWICK GROCERIES
I'LL PICK FLOWERS FOR THE DINNER TABLE!
VERY WELL, BUT NO STEALING THIS TIME. WILDFLOWERS ONLY.
FINE, WET BLANKET.
GASP!
W-WHAT IS THIS WITCHCRAFT?? I CAN'T STAY HERE ANY LONGER!
CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP!
WHAT A MARVELOUS DEMONSTRATION!
OH, MR. LEITH? I'M TERRIBLY SORRY.
I WON'T NEED YOUR SERVICES, AFTER ALL.
DR. GREEVES TOOK CARE OF IT.

SEE? WITH THIS NEW PRODUCT, PEOPLE CAN STAY SAFELY IN THEIR RESIDENCES, WHILE THE GHOSTS ARE SENT AWAY.
AND IT'S LAVENDER-SCENTED.
AH, MR LEITH! WHAT EXCELLENT TIMING.
CAN YOU CONFIRM THAT A GHOST RAN OUT OF THE FRONT DOOR JUST NOW?
YES, BUT WHAT... DR. GREEVES, WHAT IS GOING ON HERE??
IT'S GREEVES APOTHECARY'S NEW SPECIALIZED BRAND OF GHOST REPELLENT! I CALL IT "GHOST-AWAY"!
G-GHOST REPELLENT??
PRECISELY! IT TOOK A WHILE TO GATHER AND GET THE PROPORTIONS JUST RIGHT, BUT I FOLLOWED YOUR ADVICE, AND COMBINED ALL THOSE HERBS YOU MENTIONED DURING YOUR VISIT A FEW MONTHS BACK.
IT'S A MORE POTENT WAY TO WARD OFF GHOSTS! NO MORE MESSY SALT LINES OR HEXOCRINE!
SIMPLY UNCORK AND HANG THE BOTTLE FROM A DOORWAY TO DIFFUSE THE GHOST-WARDING HERBS.
REINFORCED GLASS, TOO! YOU COULD THROW IT RIGHT ONTO THE COBBLES, AND IT WOULDN'T EVEN SCRATCH!
"GHOST-AWAY" Formula for expulsion of ghosts, spectres & haunts
BUT...WHAT HAPPENS TO THE GHOSTS, THEN??
THEY "GO AWAY." HENCE THE NAME.


SOON, EVERY HOUSE IN ROOKWOOD WILL HAVE ONE OF THESE, AND OUR GHOST PROBLEM WILL BE SOLVED!
WAIT, WAIT! YOU CAN'T DO THAT! THE GHOSTS WILL BE FORCED OUT ONTO THE STREETS, AND THEY'RE ALREADY SO SCARED!
THE GHOSTS ARE SCARED, ARE THEY? GOOD.
MR. LEITH, THE GHOSTS ARE A NUISANCE. THEY DON'T BELONG IN PEOPLE'S HOUSES IN THE FIRST PLACE. LUCKILY, MY CONCOCTION IS MORE EFFECTIVE THAN RELEASING TOXIC GAS IN MY MANOR TWICE A MONTH.
TO BE FAIR, YOUR KNOWLEDGE WAS VITAL TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF GHOST-AWAY. I CAN CREDIT YOU ON THE PATENT. WOULD THAT HELP?
I-I DON'T WANT CREDIT!
FREE SAMPLE, THEN?
NO!
ARE YOU SURE? WORD AROUND TOWN IS THAT THE BOOKSHOP YOU LIVE IN IS QUITE HAUNTED.
IT'S A PERFECTLY ACCEPTABLE AMOUNT OF HAUNTED, THANK YOU-
GREEVES

GREEVES!
HOW DARE YOU CUT US OFF?!
DON'T BE SO DRAMATIC, SAUL. IT'S JUST BUSINESS.
I CREATED A FORMULA THAT'S SAFE FOR HUMAN EXPOSURE. SOON, PEOPLE WON'T NEED TO USE YOUR HEXOCRINE ANYMORE.
THEREFORE, YOU AND YOUR COHORT DON'T NEED ME TO SUPPLY THE INGREDIENTS FOR IT.
Y-YOU CAN'T DO THIS TO US!! OUR LAB HAS HAD A PARTNERSHIP WITH GREEVES APOTHECARY FOR YEARS, DECADES! I-I WORKED WITH YOUR PARENTS-!
WELL, UNLIKE MY PARENTS, I'M NO LONGER WILLING TO DISPENSE TO STUBBORN CHEMISTS WHOSE PRODUCTS POISON MORE PEOPLE THAN GHOSTS.
BUT IF IT'S JOB SECURITY YOU'RE FUSSED ABOUT...
I COULD USE SOME MORE SALESMEN FOR GHOST-AWAY.
WHAT AN INSULTING PROPOSAL. MY EXORCISTS AND I WOULD NEVER STOOP SO LOW
AS
TO...
GREEVES
GREEVES
WHAT?
SHE'S GOT A GOOD PRODUCT.
HECTOR!

A MOMENT, DOCTOR?
LOOK, IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T RESPECT YOUR EFFORTS HERE.
BUT GHOSTS AREN'T VERMIN TO BE DRIVEN AWAY. THEY ARE PEOPLE, AND YOUR PRODUCT ISN'T GOING TO HELP THEM! THEY NEED SOMEONE WHO WILL LISTEN TO THEM!
IF YOUR GHOST RETURNED, WHY DIDN'T YOU SEND FOR ME?
BECAUSE YOUR WAY DOESN'T WORK, DORIAN. THAT GHOST I PAID YOU TO GET RID OF CAME BACK A MONTH LATER, AND DIDN'T LEAVE AGAIN UNTIL I CREATED THIS.
WHAT ABOUT THE LIVING PEOPLE IN ROOKWOOD? CAN'T YOU APPRECIATE THAT MY INVENTION WILL HELP THEM?
THIS IS A METHOD THAT THEY CAN TRUST TO BE SAFER, NONTOXIC, AND PERMANENT.
YOU DON'T TRUST MY WORK?
I DON'T TRUST YOU, DORIAN LEITH.
SAUL IS A SNAKE, BUT HE MADE A GOOD POINT...
HOW COULD I TRUST A MAN WHO ESCAPED FROM THE OLD MILL INSANE ASYLUM?

WELL? IT'S TRUE, ISN'T IT?

"YES.
"MY PARENTS TRIED TO HAVE ME COMMITTED... FOR TALKING TO GHOSTS.
"I DIDN'T ESCAPE. I SIMPLY...DID NOT ARRIVE."

I...I NEVER MEANT TO DECEIVE ANYONE. I'M NOT DANGEROUS...
I'LL STAY OUT OF YOUR WAY, IF IT MEANS YOU DON'T TELL OLD MILL HOW TO FIND ME.
PLEASE, DOCTOR...PLEASE DON'T DO THIS TO THE GHOSTS.

I MAY NOT TRUST YOU, BUT I RESPECT YOUR TENACITY.
I WON'T TURN YOU IN. YOU HAVE MY WORD.
BUT I ALSO WON'T LET THE GHOSTS RUN AMOK WHILE I WAIT FOR YOU TO HAVE TEATIME WITH ALL OF THEM.

THERE'S ONLY SO MUCH ONE PERSON CAN DO, AFTER ALL.

DR. GREEVES, WAIT.
GAVIN'S LETTER...
HAVE YOU READ IT?

NO, I DID NOT READ THE BUNDLE OF BLANK PAGES YOU LEFT BY MY DOOR.
YOU HONESTLY THOUGHT THAT WOULD CHANGE MY MIND?
OH, AND SPARE ME THE LECTURE ABOUT GHOSTS NEEDING MY PERMISSION. THEY NEVER ASKED ME FOR PERMISSION TO HAUNT MY HOUSE. WHY SHOULD I GIVE ANY TO THEM?
HE'S YOUR BROTHER, PRUDENCE.

HE POURED HIS HEART INTO THAT LETTER, FOR YOU.
IF YOU STILL HAVE IT...
PLEASE READ IT.
PLEASE GIVE HIM A CHANCE.

FINE. THIS IS FINE. I'LL JUST VISIT THE HOMES THAT SHE...

...HASN'T... YET...
GOTTEN TO...

HELP ME!
PLEASE DO SOMETHING!
I CAN'T GET INSIDE THE ASSIGNED HOUSE ANYMORE! THAT BOTTLE, IT'S MADE A BARRIER OF SOME KIND!
I NEED YOU TO HEAL MY ROT AGAIN. IT'S-
I HAVE NOWHERE ELSE TO GO!
FORTY-FIVE SHILLINGS?! B-BUT WHAT ABOUT OUR DEAL?
DEAL'S CHANGED.
GREEVES WAS OUR SOLE SUPPLIER. UNTIL WE FIND ANOTHER ONE, I WON'T HAND OFF OUR LAST BATCH TO THE LIKES OF YOU.
HRMPH.

MR. CONALL! AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU!
I WANTED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT LUCY.
BUT FIRST, I NEED YOUR HELP WITH THESE GHOSTS. THEY HAVE BEEN SHUT OUT OF...

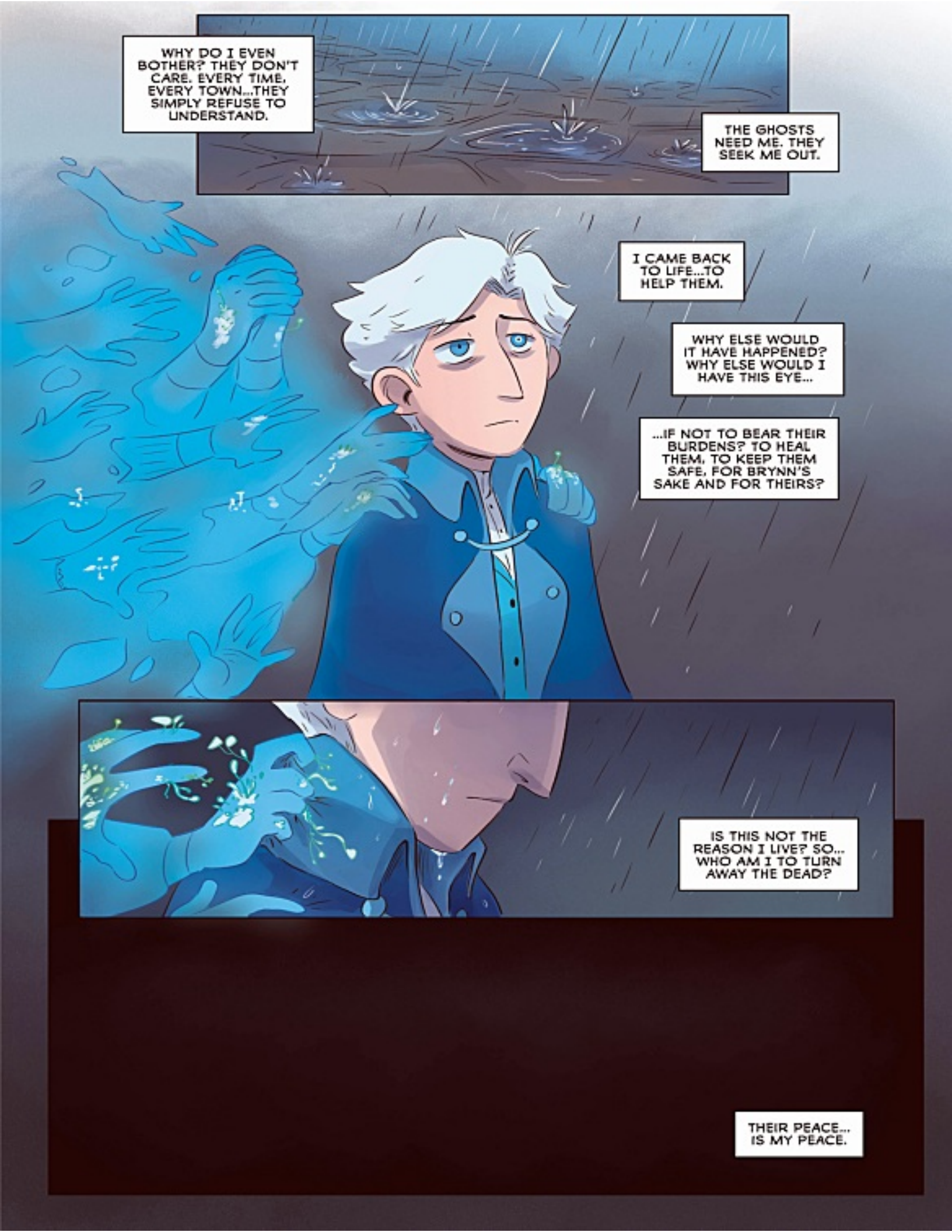
...THEIR...

NO...NOT YOU, TOO. PLEASE...

BUMP
DON'T BURDEN ME WITH YOUR MAD RAMBLINGS, LAD.
LEAVE ME BE.

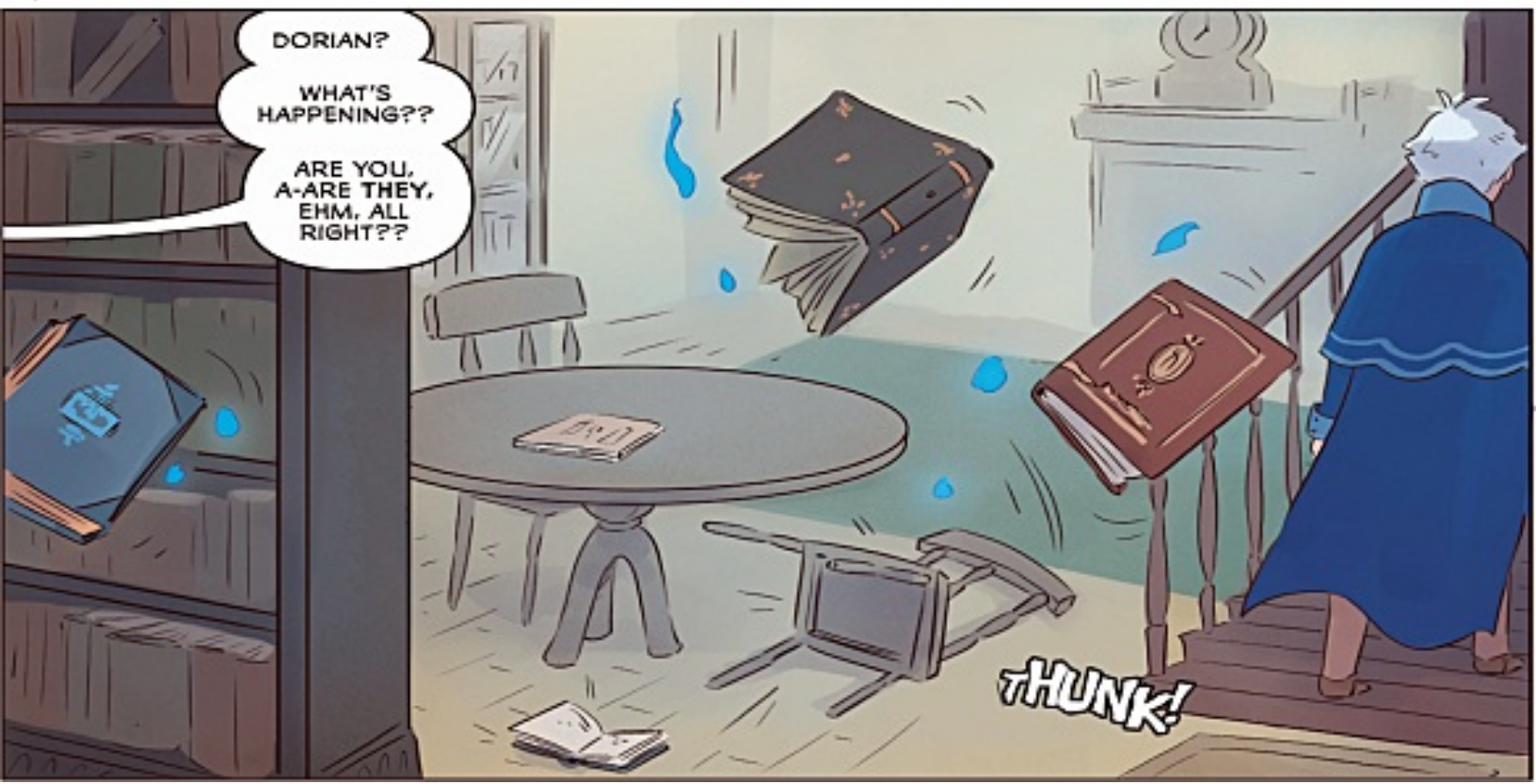
COME BACK...
DON'T LEAVE...

...PLEASE...


WHY DO I EVEN BOTHER? THEY DON'T CARE. EVERY TIME. EVERY TOWN...THEY SIMPLY REFUSE TO UNDERSTAND.
THE GHOSTS NEED ME. THEY SEEK ME OUT.
I CAME BACK TO LIFE...TO HELP THEM.
WHY ELSE WOULD IT HAVE HAPPENED? WHY ELSE WOULD I HAVE THIS EYE...
...IF NOT TO BEAR THEIR BURDENS? TO HEAL THEM, TO KEEP THEM SAFE, FOR BRYNN'S SAKE AND FOR THEIRS?
IS THIS NOT THE REASON I LIVE? SO... WHO AM I TO TURN AWAY THE DEAD?
THEIR PEACE... IS MY PEACE.

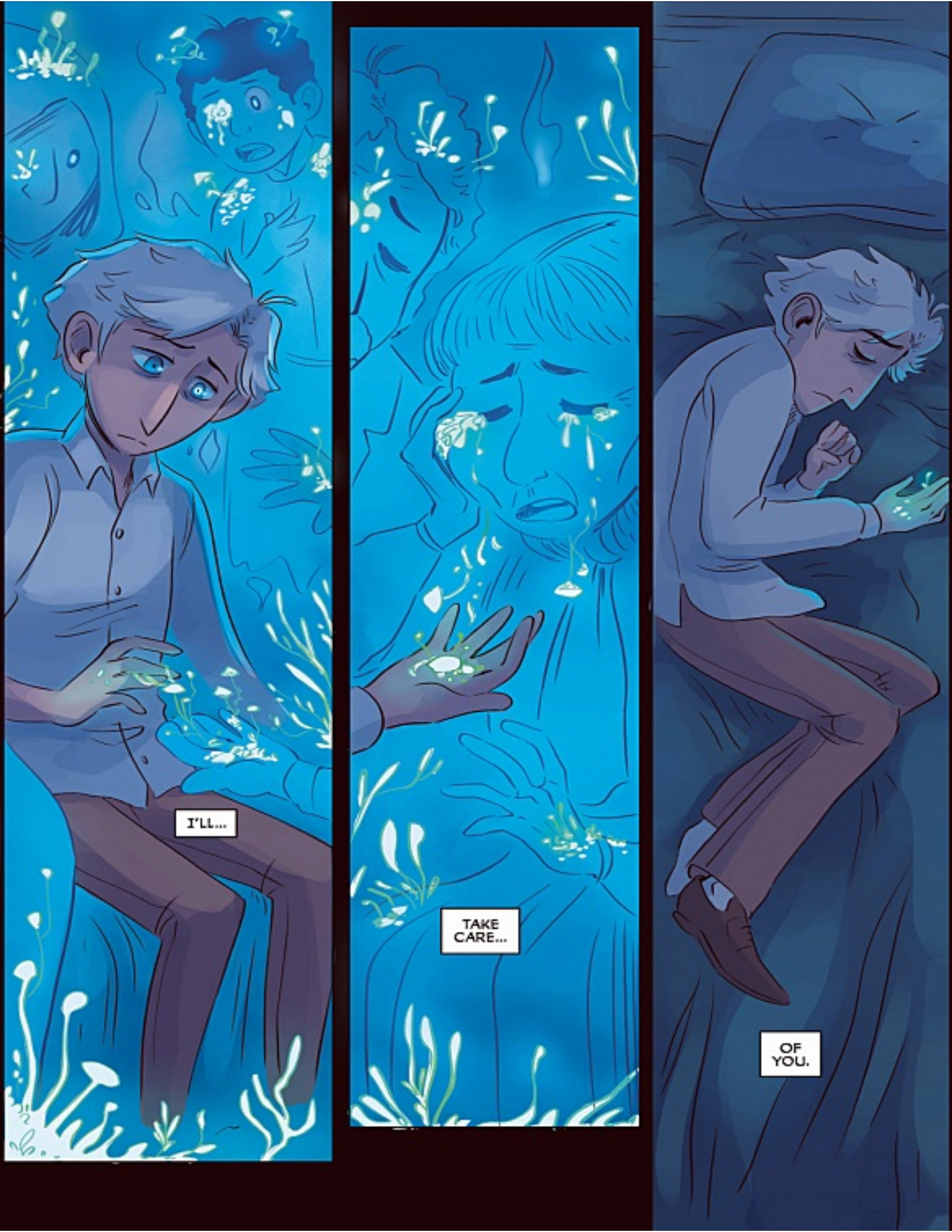
THE
BOOK ROOK
BOOKS & BOOKBINDING • SECOND HAND

WELCOME BACK! HOW WAS YOUR DAY...?


DORIAN?
WHAT'S HAPPENING??
ARE YOU, A-ARE THEY, EHM, ALL RIGHT??
THUNK!

DORIAN? LITTLE HELP??
SNATCH!
SNATCH!
AHEM.
LOOKS LIKE YOU HAVE SOME UNWANTED GUESTS, MATE.
NEVER YOU MIND, SIR.
WELL, WHEN YOU DO START TO MIND...WE CAN HELP.
HECTOR MACGILL,
GHOST WARDING SPECIALIST
AN AFFILIATE OF
Greenes Apothecarys
ENTERPRISES,
ET. AL.
HAVE A GOOD EVENING, MR. BRINGHURST.

IT'S ALL RIGHT.
YOU'RE ALL GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT.

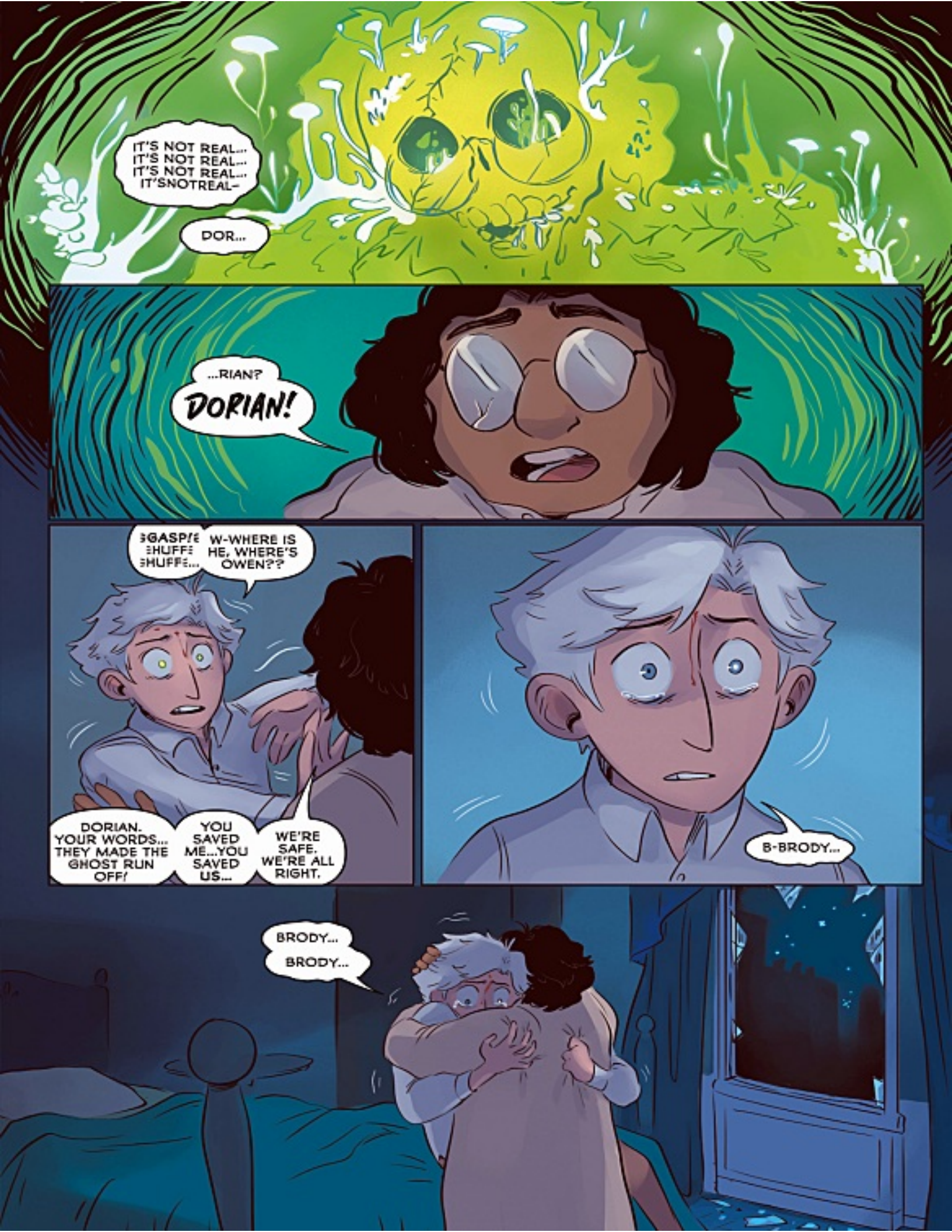

I'LL...
TAKE CARE...
OF YOU.

DORIAN...
MMM?
DORIAN...
OWEN! CURSE MY MIND, I AM SO SORRY! I MISSED OUR APPOINTMENT LAST WEEK, DIDN'T I??
TAKE IT AWAY...
GRACIOUS, YOUR ROT, IT'S- NO MATTER, I-I-I CAN TAKE CARE OF THAT RIGHT NOW!
TAKE IT AWAAAAAAY...
YES, YES, I WILL. JUST GIVE ME A MOMENT TO-
JUST... STAY CALM...
CRACK!

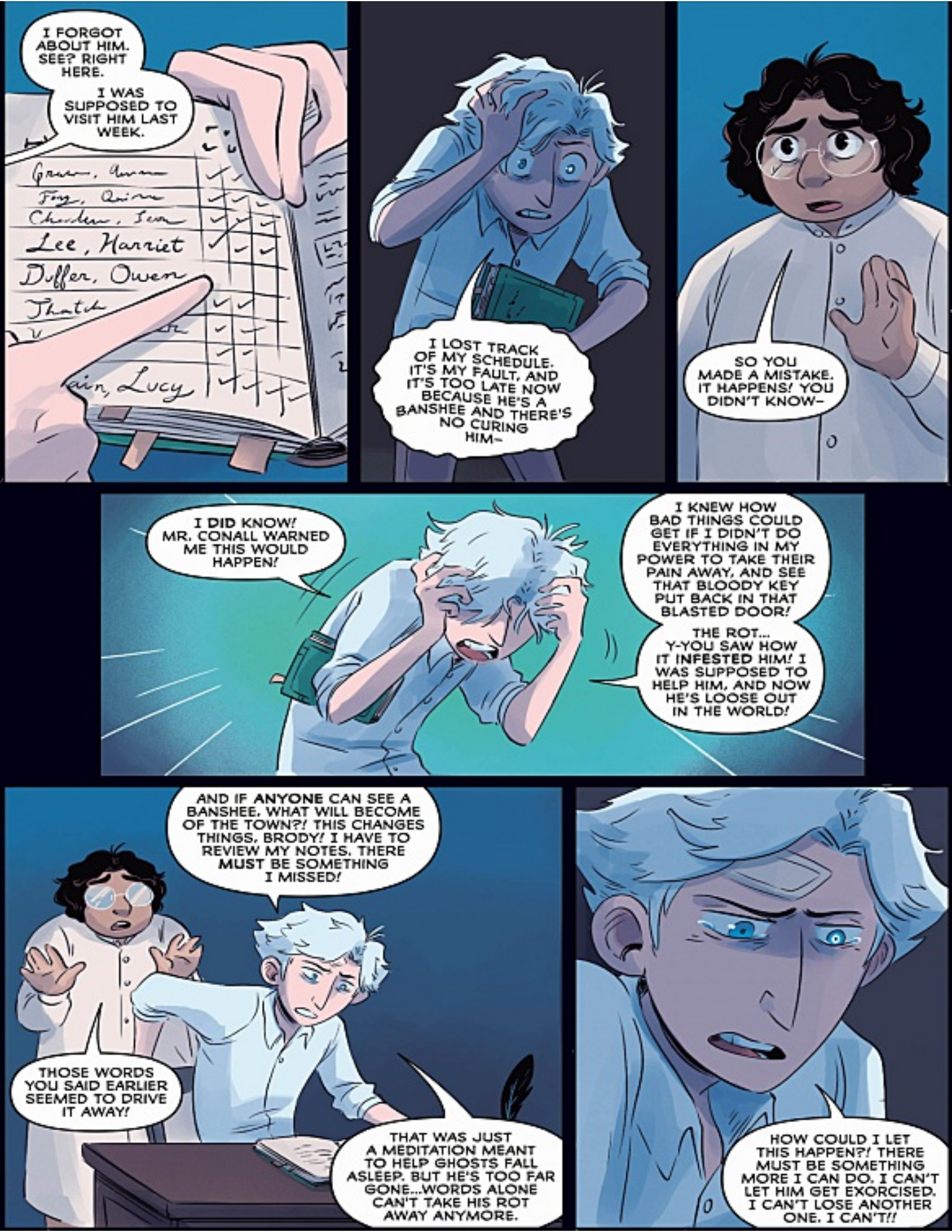
SHRIEEEK
CRRAASH!!!
AGH!!
URK!
TAKE IT AWAAAAAAAY!

DORIAN! I HEARD GLASS SHATTERING, WHAT'S GOING-??
EEYAAAAAAH!!
W-WHAT IS THAT THING?!
AGH!! IT'S BURNING!!
G-GET IT OFF ME!
G-GET IT OFF-
BRODY!!

NGGGHH!!
WHUMP
O-OWEN! IMAGINE...FLOATING... A RIVER...C-CALM AND QUIET RIVER, SWIRLING EDDIES OF STARLIGHT.
AHH, EMBRACE THAT MAKES YOU FEEL THAT–THAT EVERYTHING WILL BE ALL RIGHT.
C-C-CARRY THAT FEELING IN YOUR HEART FOR THE NEW LIFE THAT...AWAITS...
THE NEW LIFE THAT AWAITS...
THE NEW LIFE THAT AWAITS...
CARRY THAT FEELING.
DRIP. DRIP.
FSSSS...
SHRRIIIEEEEEEYAAAAAAH!!


IT'S NOT REAL...
IT'S NOT REAL...
IT'S NOT REAL...
IT'SNOTREAL-
DOR...
...RIAN?
DORIAN!
GASP!
HUFF
HUFF...
W-WHERE IS HE, WHERE'S OWEN??
DORIAN. YOUR WORDS... THEY MADE THE GHOST RUN OFF!
YOU SAVED ME...YOU SAVED US...
WE'RE SAFE. WE'RE ALL RIGHT.
B-BRODY...
BRODY...
BRODY...

YOU SAW HIM. YOU SAW OWEN.
I SAW HIM...
DO ALL YOUR GHOSTS ACT LIKE THAT? S-SCREAM LIKE THAT?
NO...THEY DON'T.
OWEN'S TURNED INTO A BANSHEE.
A BANSHEE?
B-BANSHEES ARE...REAL...?
BUT ONLY WOMEN CAN BE BANSHEES, YET– THERE IT WAS, AND–??
THE BOOK WAS WRONG. ANY GHOST IS CAPABLE OF BECOMING A BANSHEE.
LISTEN TO ME. WHEN HE SCREAMED AT YOU...DID YOU SEE ANYTHING ELSE?
I SAW– EVERYTHING WAS CRAWLING AND TWISTING IN MY VISION.
THINGS WERE GROWING ON MY ARMS–LITTLE FLOWERS, OR SPORES, I THINK. THEY'RE GONE NOW, BUT DOES THAT MEAN I'M G-GOING TO...DIE?
THE BANSHEE'S SCREAM DOES NOT KILL...IT CAUSES MADNESS.
MY VISION GREW STRANGE, AND THERE WAS ROT ON MY ARMS AS WELL. YOU NEARLY FLUNG YOURSELF FROM THE WINDOW...
IS THAT HOW THE BANSHEE MADNESS MANIFESTS...?
THAT WAS ROT?? ISN'T THAT ONLY A GHOST THING?!
HE WENT OUT THE WINDOW... TOWARD THE CEMETERY...
I HAVE TO MAKE THIS RIGHT...
BUT HOW??
HASN'T OWEN BEEN YOUR CLIENT FOR MONTHS NOW??

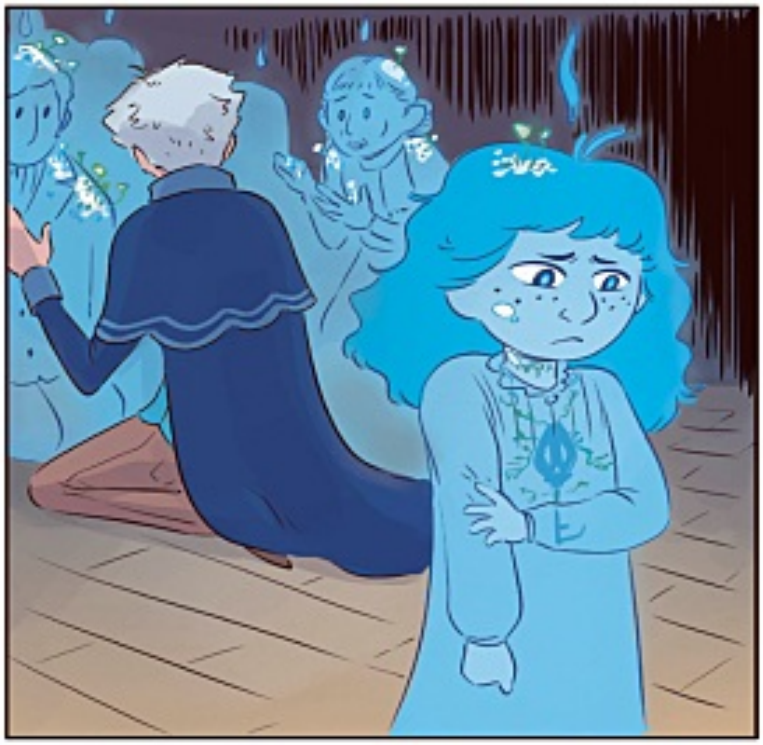

I FORGOT ABOUT HIM. SEE? RIGHT HERE.
I WAS SUPPOSED TO VISIT HIM LAST WEEK.
Lee, Harriet
Duffer, Owen
I LOST TRACK OF MY SCHEDULE. IT'S MY FAULT, AND IT'S TOO LATE NOW BECAUSE HE'S A BANSHEE AND THERE'S NO CURING HIM–
SO YOU MADE A MISTAKE. IT HAPPENS! YOU DIDN'T KNOW–
I DID KNOW! MR. CONALL WARNED ME THIS WOULD HAPPEN!
I KNEW HOW BAD THINGS COULD GET IF I DIDN'T DO EVERYTHING IN MY POWER TO TAKE THEIR PAIN AWAY, AND SEE THAT BLOODY KEY PUT BACK IN THAT BLASTED DOOR!
THE ROT... Y-YOU SAW HOW IT INFESTED HIM! I WAS SUPPOSED TO HELP HIM, AND NOW HE'S LOOSE OUT IN THE WORLD!
AND IF ANYONE CAN SEE A BANSHEE, WHAT WILL BECOME OF THE TOWN?! THIS CHANGES THINGS, BRODY! I HAVE TO REVIEW MY NOTES. THERE MUST BE SOMETHING I MISSED!
THOSE WORDS YOU SAID EARLIER SEEMED TO DRIVE IT AWAY!
THAT WAS JUST A MEDITATION MEANT TO HELP GHOSTS FALL ASLEEP. BUT HE'S TOO FAR GONE...WORDS ALONE CAN'T TAKE HIS ROT AWAY ANYMORE.
HOW COULD I LET THIS HAPPEN?! THERE MUST BE SOMETHING MORE I CAN DO. I CAN'T LET HIM GET EXORCISED. I CAN'T LOSE ANOTHER ONE. I CAN'T!!

I CAN'T... I...I CAN'T...
SHHH... IT'S ALL RIGHT. LISTEN, DORIAN. OUTSIDE.
NO SCREAMS. NEITHER LIVING NOR DEAD.
WHEREVER HE IS, HE'S OF NO MIND TO CAUSE TROUBLE, FOR NOW.
PLEASE, GET SOME SLEEP, LOVE. YOU'LL HAVE A CLEARER HEAD IN THE MORN.
SNIFFF...I'LL BE FINE. I COULDN'T POSSIBLY SLEEP NOW.
THERE'S NO TIME FOR IT, ANYHOW. WHAT IF A BANSHEE CAN INFLICT MADNESS ON OTHER GHOSTS? HOW LONG BEFORE OWEN FINDS ANOTHER VICTIM? I MUST DRAW UP A PLAN TO TAKE CARE OF THE REST OF THEM.
BUT WHO'S TAKING CARE OF YOU?
THIS IS MY WORK, BRODY. I DON'T NEED TO BE TAKEN CARE OF LIKE SOME FEEBLE CHILD!
IS IT TOO MUCH TO ASK FOR SOMEONE IN THIS BLOODY TOWN TO TRUST MY WORK?!
SO, WHAT, YOU DON'T TRUST ME TO BE ABLE TO HELP YOU?
WHAT COULD YOU POSSIBLY DO TO HELP ME?? I HAVE TO FIGURE THIS OUT MYSELF, AND I CAN'T DO THAT IF I DON'T GET SOME PEACE AND-
COUGH, COUGH, HACK!
DORIAN? YOU ALL RIGHT?

I'M...
FINE...
VERY WELL, BUT...
IS ME LEAVING YOU ALONE REALLY WHAT YOU WANT?
IS THAT GOING TO BE HELPFUL TO YOU?
GOOD NIGHT, BRODY.
G-GOOD NIGHT.

COUGH, COUGH...

OWEN... OWEN, WHERE ARE YOU?

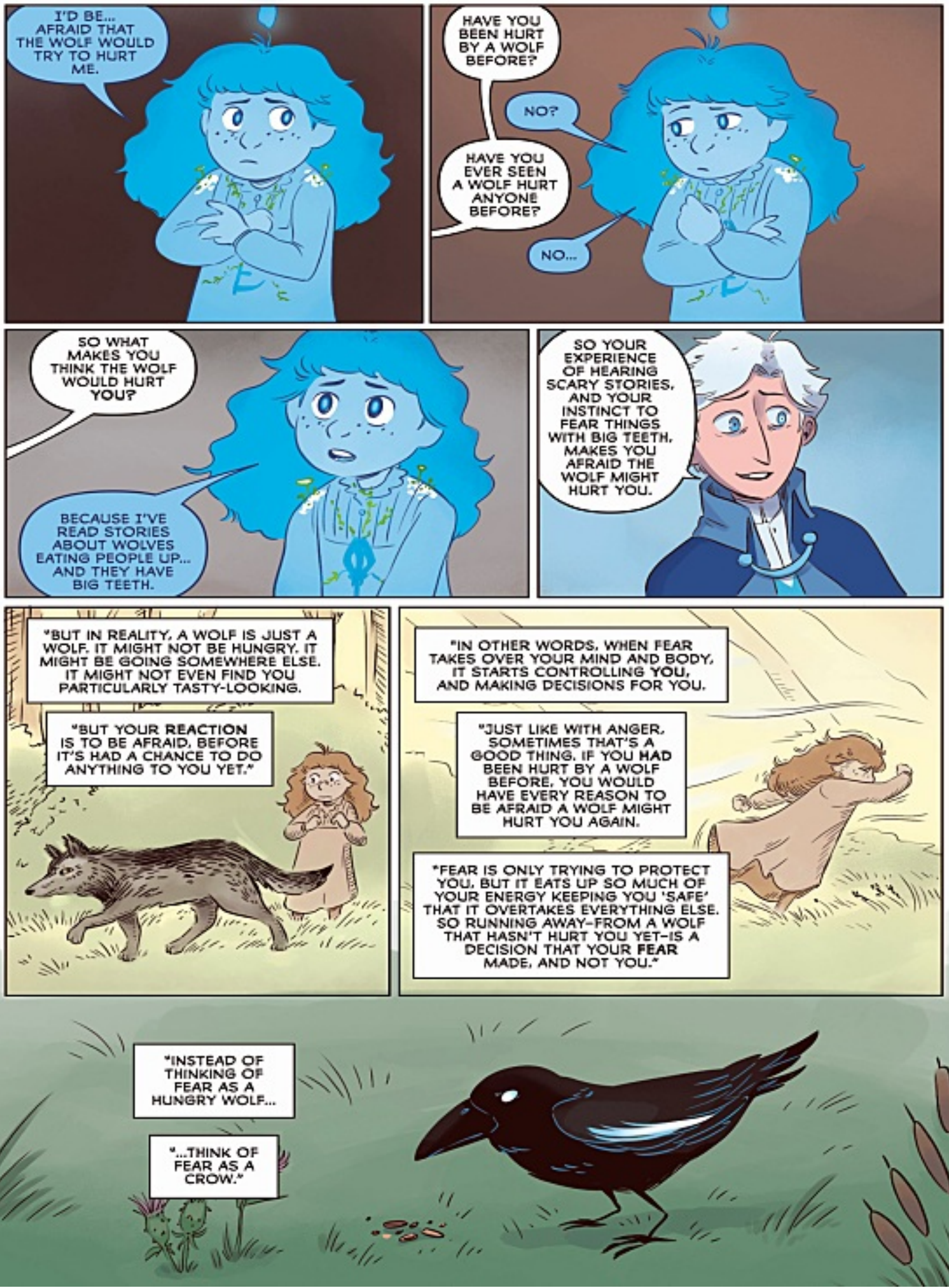


NOW, HOLD ON.
THIS IS TAKING TOO LONG, AND MY ROT KEEPS GROWING BACK! IF YOU CAN'T HEAL ME IN A WAY THAT'S GONNA LAST, I'LL FIND SOMEONE WHO CAN!
B-BUT THERE ISN'T ANYONE ELSE WHO CAN.
PLEASE, COME BACK!
IT'S HER FAULT WE'RE TRAPPED HERE!
SHE STOLE THE KEY!
PUT IT BACK, YOU LITTLE BRAT!
I CAN'T! NOT UNTIL DORIAN CURES MY ROT!
EVERY DAY, HE CURES YOU, AND EVERY DAY YOUR ROT GROWS BACK!
SO?! YOURS GREW BACK, TOO!

WHAT IS GOING ON IN HERE?
DORIAN! THEY'RE BEING MEAN TO ME AGAIN!
I TOOK CARE OF THIS ROT YESTERDAY. HOW DID IT GROW BACK SO QUICKLY??
BECAUSE SHE DOESN'T WANT TO GET BETTER. SHE'S DOING IT ON PURPOSE SO YOU'LL KEEP GIVING HER SPECIAL TREATMENT!
LEAVE LUCY ALONE. SHE'S SUFFERED ENOUGH.
SHE'S SUFFERED? SHE'S THE CAUSE OF ALL THIS! THINGS WERE JUST FINE UNTIL SHE CAME ALONG!
COME ON, LUCY. LET'S GO FEED THE CROWS.

STOP CODDLING HER! CAN'T YOU SEE SHE'S KEEPING YOU AWAY FROM ME??
YOU SPEND HOURS EVERY DAY, PLAYING HOUSE AND BEING BIG-BROTHER-DEAREST, WHEN YOU SHOULD BE SPENDING THAT TIME HEALING THE REST OF US!
HOW IS THAT FAIR?!
NO MATTER HOW MUCH YOU TRY, SHE'S NEVER GOING TO REPLACE BRYNN!
SLAM!

WHAT IF MY ROT NEVER GOES AWAY?
WHAT IF YOU CAN'T HEAL ME, AFTER ALL?
THAT SOUNDS LIKE YOUR FEARS TALKING.
REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YOU ABOUT FEAR?
THAT IT'S... BAD...?
NOT ENTIRELY.
FEAR IS A REACTION TO SOMETHING SCARY. WE CAN'T CONTROL WHAT MAKES US AFRAID. IT JUST SORT OF HAPPENS.
BUT FEAR IS A HUNGRY THING... IT TENDS TO EAT UP ALL OF OUR ENERGY, AND WHEN FEAR OVERCOMES US, IT ALSO EATS THE ENERGY WE WOULD OTHERWISE SPEND ON MAKING DECISIONS.
DOES THAT MAKE SENSE?
NOT REALLY.
FOR INSTANCE: IF YOU SAW A WOLF WALKING TOWARD YOU, HOW WOULD THAT MAKE YOU FEEL?
WELL, I'M ALREADY DEAD, SO...
ER, RIGHT. WHEN YOU WERE ALIVE, I MEAN.


I'D BE... AFRAID THAT THE WOLF WOULD TRY TO HURT ME.
HAVE YOU BEEN HURT BY A WOLF BEFORE?
NO?
HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A WOLF HURT ANYONE BEFORE?
NO...
SO WHAT MAKES YOU THINK THE WOLF WOULD HURT YOU?
BECAUSE I'VE READ STORIES ABOUT WOLVES EATING PEOPLE UP... AND THEY HAVE BIG TEETH.
SO YOUR EXPERIENCE OF HEARING SCARY STORIES, AND YOUR INSTINCT TO FEAR THINGS WITH BIG TEETH, MAKES YOU AFRAID THE WOLF MIGHT HURT YOU.
"BUT IN REALITY, A WOLF IS JUST A WOLF. IT MIGHT NOT BE HUNGRY. IT MIGHT BE GOING SOMEWHERE ELSE. IT MIGHT NOT EVEN FIND YOU PARTICULARLY TASTY-LOOKING.
"BUT YOUR REACTION IS TO BE AFRAID, BEFORE IT'S HAD A CHANCE TO DO ANYTHING TO YOU YET."
"IN OTHER WORDS, WHEN FEAR TAKES OVER YOUR MIND AND BODY, IT STARTS CONTROLLING YOU, AND MAKING DECISIONS FOR YOU.
"JUST LIKE WITH ANGER, SOMETIMES THAT'S A GOOD THING. IF YOU HAD BEEN HURT BY A WOLF BEFORE, YOU WOULD HAVE EVERY REASON TO BE AFRAID A WOLF MIGHT HURT YOU AGAIN.
"FEAR IS ONLY TRYING TO PROTECT YOU. BUT IT EATS UP SO MUCH OF YOUR ENERGY KEEPING YOU 'SAFE' THAT IT OVERTAKES EVERYTHING ELSE. SO RUNNING AWAY–FROM A WOLF THAT HASN'T HURT YOU YET–IS A DECISION THAT YOUR FEAR MADE, AND NOT YOU."
"INSTEAD OF THINKING OF FEAR AS A HUNGRY WOLF...
"...THINK OF FEAR AS A CROW."

"IT FLIES IN, LIKE AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR.
CAW! CAW!
"IT SITS FOR A WHILE, AND BRINGS YOU A WARNING. SOMETIMES THE WARNING MAKES QUITE A RACKET.
"THEN, AFTER SOME TIME, WHEN THERE'S NOTHING LEFT FOR IT TO EAT, IT FLIES AWAY."
LET YOUR FEARS SIT WITH YOU FOR A TIME.
USE THAT TIME TO THINK THROUGH YOUR SITUATION, AND DECIDE ON HOW YOU WANT TO RESPOND TO IT, RATHER THAN LETTING YOUR FEAR TAKE THE REINS.
CAW!
CAW!
CAW!
CAW!
CAW!
THEN LET THEM FLY AWAY.
I'LL FIND A MORE EFFECTIVE WAY TO TAKE CARE OF YOU. SO DON'T WORRY, ALL RIGHT?

MR. LEITH, SIR, IT'S MY TURN.
AH, I'LL BE RIGHT WITH YOU.

...FLY AWAY.

HOP
HOP

LET ME KNOW HOW YOU FEEL IN A COUPLE DAYS.
BEG PARDON?

APOLOGIES, MADAM.
I WASN'T TALKING TO YOU.

WAIT... JAMIE, THIS IS WHERE THE GHOST-EYED MAN HANGS ABOUT?
EW, HE TALKED TO A GHOST! COME, JESSIE DEAR, WE SHOULD LEAVE BEFORE WE GET HAUNTED, TOO.

EHMPH...E
HM?

Meet me at the new pudding café after work?
-Brody

nod, nod

IF YOU HAVE TIME FOR A HOLIDAY, YOU HAVE TIME TO WORK.
IT'S NOT A HOLIDAY. BRODY WANTS TO GO TO THE CAFÉ.
PLAYBILL
LAZARUS
WELL, DON'T STAY OUT TOO LONG.
I THOUGHT YOU LIKED BRODY.
BRODY IS LOVELY, BUT I'VE SEEN YOUR SCHEDULE THIS WEEK. YOU HAVE TOO MANY GHOSTS WAITING.
HE'LL UNDERSTAND.
MM-HM.
THE BLUE ONE, DEAR.
CHEERS.

ARE YOU KEEPING ON ALL RIGHT, LU?
I GUESS. YOU'RE LEAVING AGAIN?
BRODY AND I ARE GOING OUT FOR A BIT. I'LL FIX UP YOUR ROT WHEN I GET HOME.
SIGH... COME BACK SOON.
J T L F G
ARGH!
CRINKLE, CRINKLE!

MADAME
MYSTERY
SIGH...
I BEG YOUR PARDON? WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING IN MY PARLOR??
COULD YOU REALLY DO MAGIC?
PLAYBILL
LAZARUS
OF COURSE I COULD.
PEOPLE TRAVELED FROM ALL OVER THE COUNTRYSIDE TO SEE MY SHOWS.
I MEAN REAL MAGIC. NOT THE FAKE KIND.
LIKE MAGIC THAT CAN MAKE ROT STOP ITCHING AND GO AWAY.

NO...ONLY DORIAN CAN DO THAT.
OH...
DID YOU EVER LIVE IN A CANDY HOUSE?
WHAT ON EARTH ARE THESE QUESTIONS??
IT'S JUST THAT I READ IN A BOOK THAT GRANNIES SOMETIMES LIVE IN CANDY HOUSES, AND BAKE SWEETS AND CROSS-STITCH.
BUT YOU DON'T DO ANY OF THAT. YOU DON'T BAKE, YOU DON'T EMBROIDER, YOU DON'T PAINT. YOU JUST...TALK ABOUT THEATRE SHOWS, READ OLD MAGAZINES, AND BOSS DORIAN AROUND?
SO I WAS NEVER ONE FOR CONFORMITY. WHAT'S YOUR POINT?
THEN WHAT MAKES YOU A PROPER GRANNY?

HAVING GRANDCHILDREN, FOR A START.
I LOVE MY DORIE. I SUPPORT HIM, AND PASS ON MY KNOWLEDGE OF HOW TO KEEP A BUSINESS.
I MAY NOT HAVE BEEN AROUND TO DO THE TYPICAL GRAN "ACTIVITIES," BUT THAT DOESN'T MAKE ME ANY LESS OF ONE.
YOU "WEREN'T AROUND"? SO YOU WEREN'T THERE WHEN DORIAN'S PARENTS TOLD EVERYONE HE WAS MAD??
YOU DON'T GET TO KEEP DORIAN ALL TO YOURSELF NOW, JUST BECAUSE YOU CAME BACK AFTER ABANDONING HIM!
I DIDN'T ABANDON HIM!
I NEVER GOT TO MEET DORIAN BACK THEN, BECAUSE I WAS STUCK IN LIMBO!
I PASSED AWAY BEFORE EITHER BRYNN OR DORIAN WERE BORN.
NOT THAT I WOULD HAVE KNOWN, ANYWAY. MY SON STOPPED VISITING WHEN MY MAGIC ACT TOOK OFF. HIS WIFE DIDN'T APPROVE OF MY ONSTAGE PERSONA...OR MY "WITCHCRAFT."
BUT I HAD ACCEPTED THAT THE ONLY THINGS I'D LOST WERE A SON AND DAUGHTER-IN-LAW; I FOUND THE PEACE AND REST I NEEDED TO GET TO LIMBO. MY MAGIC ACT WAS WORTH THAT LOSS, AND AT LEAST THE MEMORY OF MY ACT WOULD LIVE ON AFTER I WAS GONE.
IF I HAD ONLY KNOWN...WHO ELSE I'D LOST–
SO THAT'S WHY YOU DIDN'T GO THROUGH DEATH'S DOOR? YOU WANTED TO COME BACK AND BE DORIAN'S GRAN INSTEAD?
"I DIDN'T GO THROUGH DEATH'S DOOR...
"...BECAUSE I NEVER FOUND IT."

"FIFTEEN YEARS, TRAPPED IN THAT ROTTEN BOG...

"TOO BURDENED TO MOVE FORWARD, LONGING FOR THE COMFORT OF A FAMILY AGAIN, BUT NOTHING LEFT FOR MY SOUL TO WAKE BACK UP FOR.

"WONDERING WHAT I HAD DONE TO DESERVE SUCH A FATE...

"...AND SEARCHING FOR A DOOR I WASN'T EVEN SURE WAS REAL ANYMORE."

"AND THEN, THERE HE WAS...LITTLE DORIAN, THE SPITTING IMAGE OF MY SON, MALCOLM.

"PERHAPS IF I HAD FOUND DEATH'S DOOR, THINGS WOULD BE DIFFERENT."

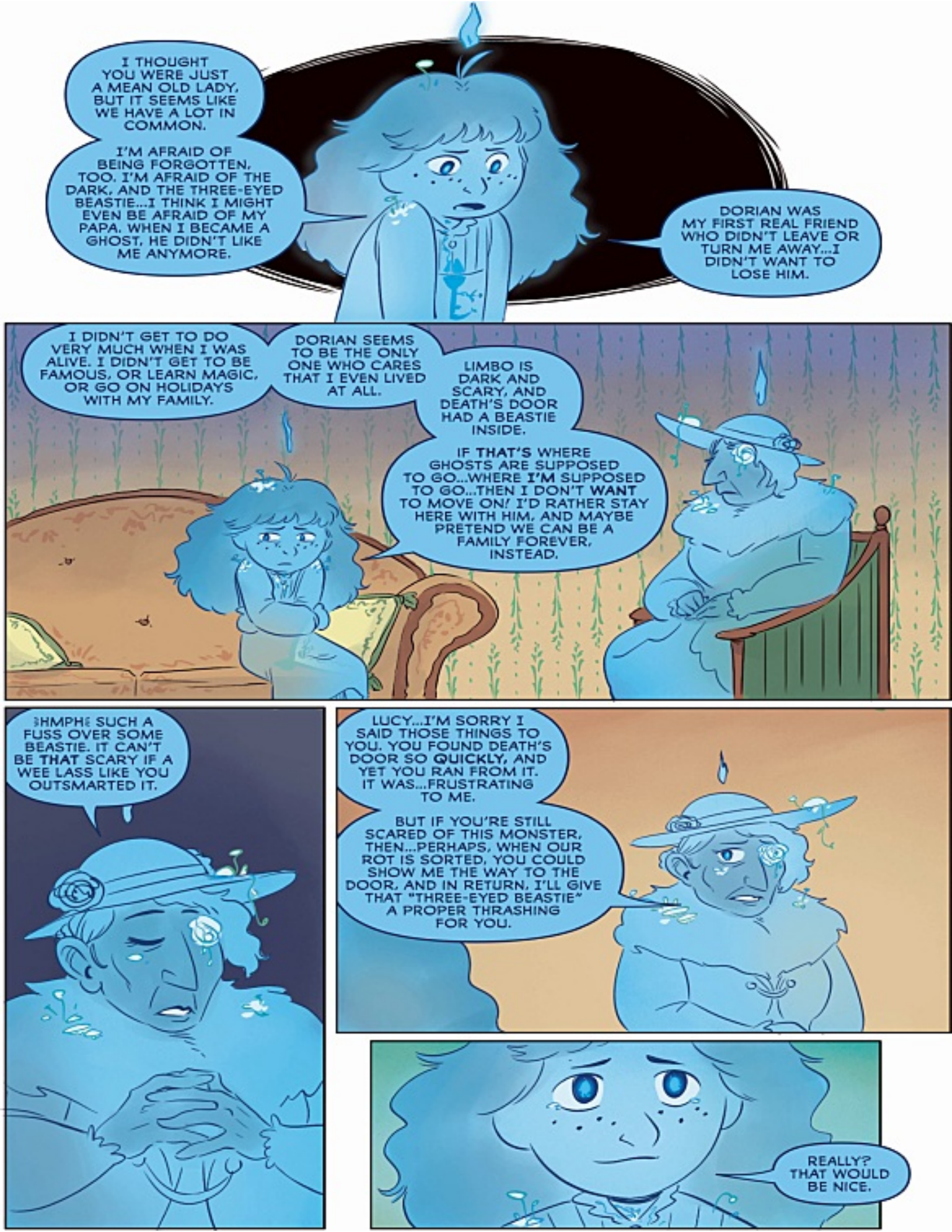
"ALL I KNOW IS THAT I WOULD STILL BE LOST IN THERE, WITHOUT HIM."

THERE WAS SO MUCH I NEVER GOT TO DO WITH THEM. PLAY-DATES. STORYTIMES. EVEN MAGIC SHOWS...TO SPITE MALCOLM, OF COURSE.

CAN ANYONE BLAME ME FOR WANTING TO MAKE UP FOR LOST TIME, EVEN IF IT MEANS OVERSTAYING MY WELCOME IN THE LIVING WORLD? WHAT ELSE WOULD I DO? GET LOST IN LIMBO AGAIN?

AT LEAST HERE, I HAVE A ROLE I CAN PLAY.

AFTER ALL... THERE'S NO FATE WORSE THAN BEING FORGOTTEN.


I THOUGHT YOU WERE JUST A MEAN OLD LADY, BUT IT SEEMS LIKE WE HAVE A LOT IN COMMON.
I'M AFRAID OF BEING FORGOTTEN, TOO. I'M AFRAID OF THE DARK, AND THE THREE-EYED BEASTIE...I THINK I MIGHT EVEN BE AFRAID OF MY PAPA. WHEN I BECAME A GHOST, HE DIDN'T LIKE ME ANYMORE.
DORIAN WAS MY FIRST REAL FRIEND WHO DIDN'T LEAVE OR TURN ME AWAY...I DIDN'T WANT TO LOSE HIM.
I DIDN'T GET TO DO VERY MUCH WHEN I WAS ALIVE. I DIDN'T GET TO BE FAMOUS, OR LEARN MAGIC, OR GO ON HOLIDAYS WITH MY FAMILY.
DORIAN SEEMS TO BE THE ONLY ONE WHO CARES THAT I EVEN LIVED AT ALL.
LIMBO IS DARK AND SCARY, AND DEATH'S DOOR HAD A BEASTIE INSIDE.
IF THAT'S WHERE GHOSTS ARE SUPPOSED TO GO...WHERE I'M SUPPOSED TO GO...THEN I DON'T WANT TO MOVE ON! I'D RATHER STAY HERE WITH HIM, AND MAYBE PRETEND WE CAN BE A FAMILY FOREVER, INSTEAD.
HMPH! SUCH A FUSS OVER SOME BEASTIE. IT CAN'T BE THAT SCARY IF A WEE LASS LIKE YOU OUTSMARTED IT.
LUCY...I'M SORRY I SAID THOSE THINGS TO YOU. YOU FOUND DEATH'S DOOR SO QUICKLY, AND YET YOU RAN FROM IT. IT WAS...FRUSTRATING TO ME.
BUT IF YOU'RE STILL SCARED OF THIS MONSTER, THEN...PERHAPS, WHEN OUR ROT IS SORTED, YOU COULD SHOW ME THE WAY TO THE DOOR, AND IN RETURN, I'LL GIVE THAT "THREE-EYED BEASTIE" A PROPER THRASHING FOR YOU.
REALLY? THAT WOULD BE NICE.

DORIAN'S LUCKY TO HAVE A GRAN LIKE YOU.
I NEVER HAD ONE, BUT I THINK I WOULD HAVE LIKED ONE.
I LIKE STORYTIMES, AND PLAYDATES. EVEN THOUGH I WAS TOO ILL FOR THOSE. BUT IF I HAD A MAGICAL GRAN, WE WOULD HAVE PLAYED ALL DAY LONG, EATEN SWEETS, AND LEARNED ALL KINDS OF MAGIC TRICKS.
AND, WELL... WE'RE BOTH HERE NOW, SO...COULD WE PRETEND FOR A LITTLE WHILE? THAT I'M THE GRANDDAUGHTER, AND YOU'RE THE GRAN?
WELL, I CAN'T BAKE YOU ANY SWEETS, BUT I CAN CERTAINLY TEACH YOU THE SECRETS OF MAGIC, GUARANTEED TO GRANT YOU COURAGE AND CONFIDENCE IN THE FACE OF MONSTERS!
FIRST RULE OF MAGIC: **EVERYTHING** GOES ACCORDING TO PLAN, EVEN WHEN IT DOESN'T!
BE INTENTIONAL, AND BE **GRANDIOSE.** CONVINCE YOUR AUDIENCE YOU HAVE POWER AND CONTROL. AND EVEN YOUR MISTAKES WILL LOOK LIKE THEY'RE ALL PART OF THE SHOW!

FWP!
SECOND RULE: A TRUE MAGICIAN MAKES A SPECTACLE OF THE MUNDANE!
I DID IT! DID YOU SEE ME??
EXCELLENT FORM, DEAR!
AND NOW, FOR THE GRAND FINALE...
BRAVA!

LUCY, WHERE ARE YOU GOING? YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BOW!
THESE ARE FOR YOU!
CRINKLE
OH... CRUMPLED PIECES OF PAPER. HOW...
THOUGHTFUL.
THEY'RE CARNATIONS. PINK ONES MEAN GRANDMOTHER-HOOD!
ONLY THESE WON'T DRY UP LIKE REAL ONES WOULD. THEY'LL LAST FOREVER!
THIS WAY, YOU WON'T EVER BE FORGOTTEN AGAIN.
THANK YOU, LUCY.
YOU'RE A GOOD CHILD.

CAFE
COLD · COMFORTS · CAFÉ
PUDDINGS
TEA
SWEETS

HELLO.
HIYA.

HOW WAS WORK TODAY?
IT WAS FINE...
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?
GHOSTS. THEY GET A BIT RESTLESS WHEN I'M OUT...
DON'T WANT THEM BECOMING BANSHEES.
I'M QUITE SURE THEY CAN LAST AN HOUR WITHOUT YOU.
CAN THEY, THOUGH?
THE ROT GROWS BACK FASTER THAN I CAN ABSORB IT. THE GHOSTS CAN'T SEEM TO COPE ANYMORE...
THEY'RE STARTING TO GIVE UP ON MOVING ON ENTIRELY!
AH, WELL, WHAT CAN YOU DO?
I'M DOING EVERYTHING I CAN, BRODY!
THE LONGER THEY'RE STUCK HERE, THE MORE THEY RUN THE RISK OF SUCCUMBING TO THEIR FEARS AND TURNING INTO BANSHEES!
BUT NOTHING IS WORKING...IT'S LIKE THEY DON'T WANT TO BE CURED!
WELL, YOU CAN'T EXACTLY FORCE THEM TO HEAL, CAN YOU?

N-NO...BUT SORT OF, IT'S MY JOB TO–
SERIOUSLY, THINK ABOUT IT. WHAT IF YOU CAN'T? WHAT IF NOTHING GETS BETTER? HOW WOULD ANY OF THAT BE YOUR FAULT?
BECAUSE NO ONE ELSE IS WILLING TO TRY, AND THE ONLY OTHER PERSON WHO COULD HAVE HELPED ME THREW HIS LOT IN WITH THE EXORCISTS, AND WANTS NOTHING TO DO WITH ME!
BUT LOOK WHAT THIS IS DOING TO YOU! YOU DON'T SLEEP, YOU BARELY EAT. YOU USED TO JEST, YOU USED TO SMILE ALL THE TIME!
THESE GHOSTS ARE DRAINING YOU DRY, AND YOU LET THEM HAVE ACCESS TO YOU ALL HOURS OF THE DAY AND NIGHT!
IS HEALING THEM REALLY WORTH ALL THAT?

IT DOESN'T MATTER HOW I FEEL.
THEY DEPEND ON ME.
I CAN'T ABANDON THEM. YOU KNOW THIS.
HERE.
H-HYACINTH? BUT THIS IS FOR–
I KNOW. PLEASE, OPEN THE BOX.
LISTEN, DORIAN. I WANT TO SUPPORT YOUR WORK. TRULY, I DO.
BUT NOT IF IT'S GOING TO BE THE DEATH OF YOU.
"GHOST-AWAY" Formula for expulsion of ghosts, spectres & haunts
...WHERE DID YOU GET THIS?

FROM PRUDENCE GREEVES.
I INTEND TO HANG IT IN THE BOOKSHOP.
ENOUGH IS ENOUGH. THE GHOSTS HAVE MADE A CONSTANT MESS OF THE BOOK ROOK EVER SINCE THEY ARRIVED. TOSSING BOOKS AROUND, TEARING PAGES OUT! MY CUSTOMERS DESERVE TO FEEL SAFE IN MY SHOP.

AND FRANKLY, SO DO WE. OWEN COULD HAVE KILLED US THAT NIGHT, DORIAN! EVERY NIGHT SINCE, I'VE WORRIED THAT ANOTHER GHOST MIGHT HURT YOU, AND THERE'D BE NOTHING I COULD DO.
IS THIS HOW IT'S GOING TO BE NOW, ME WATCHING YOU BE PREVAILED UPON AND HARRASSED ALL DAY BY THOSE THINGS??
I TRIED TO BE PATIENT. I TRIED TO UNDERSTAND, BUT THIS...

...THIS IS TOO MUCH.

WHATEVER HAPPENED TO, "GHOSTS AND ALL"?

SOMETIMES IT FEELS LIKE...
GHOSTS ARE ALL THAT'S LEFT OF YOU.
BRODY...N-NO, BRODY, LOVE–PLEASE, YOU CAN'T DO THIS! I NEED YOU!
ALL OF THE OTHER FLATS AND MANORS IN ROOKWOOD HAVE THESE HORRID GHOST-AWAY BOTTLES HANGING IN THEM NOW. THE GHOSTS WILL HAVE NOWHERE ELSE TO GO.
I-I'LL HOLD THE SESSIONS IN MY ROOM FROM NOW ON! AWAY FROM THE SHOP AREA. BUT I CAN'T TAKE CARE OF THEM IF THERE'S GHOST REPELLENT IN OUR FLAT!
THEN MAYBE YOU WOULD BE BETTER OFF LIVING SOMEWHERE ELSE.
PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT.

FINE, YOU GET YOUR WISH.
I'LL TAKE THE GHOSTS AND LEAVE.
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN YOU WOULDN'T BE ANY DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHERS, IN THE END.
PEOPLE LIKE YOU NEVER ARE.
DORIAN, WAIT!
COLD · COMFORTS · CAFÉ
TEA
SWEETS
COFFEE

COLD · COMFORTS · CAFÉ
TEA
SWEETS
COFFEE

COLD · COMFORTS · CAFÉ
TEA
SWEETS
COFFEE

DORIAN'S BACK!

GUESS WHAT! GRAN AND I HAD A GOOD CHAT, AND WE PUT ON A MAGIC SHOW FOR THE GHOSTS, AND LOOK!
SOME OF THE ROT... WENT...

DORIAN? WHAT'S WRONG?

WE HAVE TO GO NOW.
GO? GO WHERE?
SOMEWHERE. ANYWHERE. WE CAN'T STAY HERE ANYMORE.

SHOULD WE WAIT FOR BRODY?

HE'S NOT COMING.

CHINK! CHINK!
CRRRRKK!
CREEEAAAKK-.-
THIS WILL DO, FOR NOW...
THE CAMPBELLS LEFT QUITE A BIT OF FURNITURE BEHIND...

WHO WAS MY EIGHT O'CLOCK AGAIN...?
Meet me at the new pudding cafe after work?
~Brody

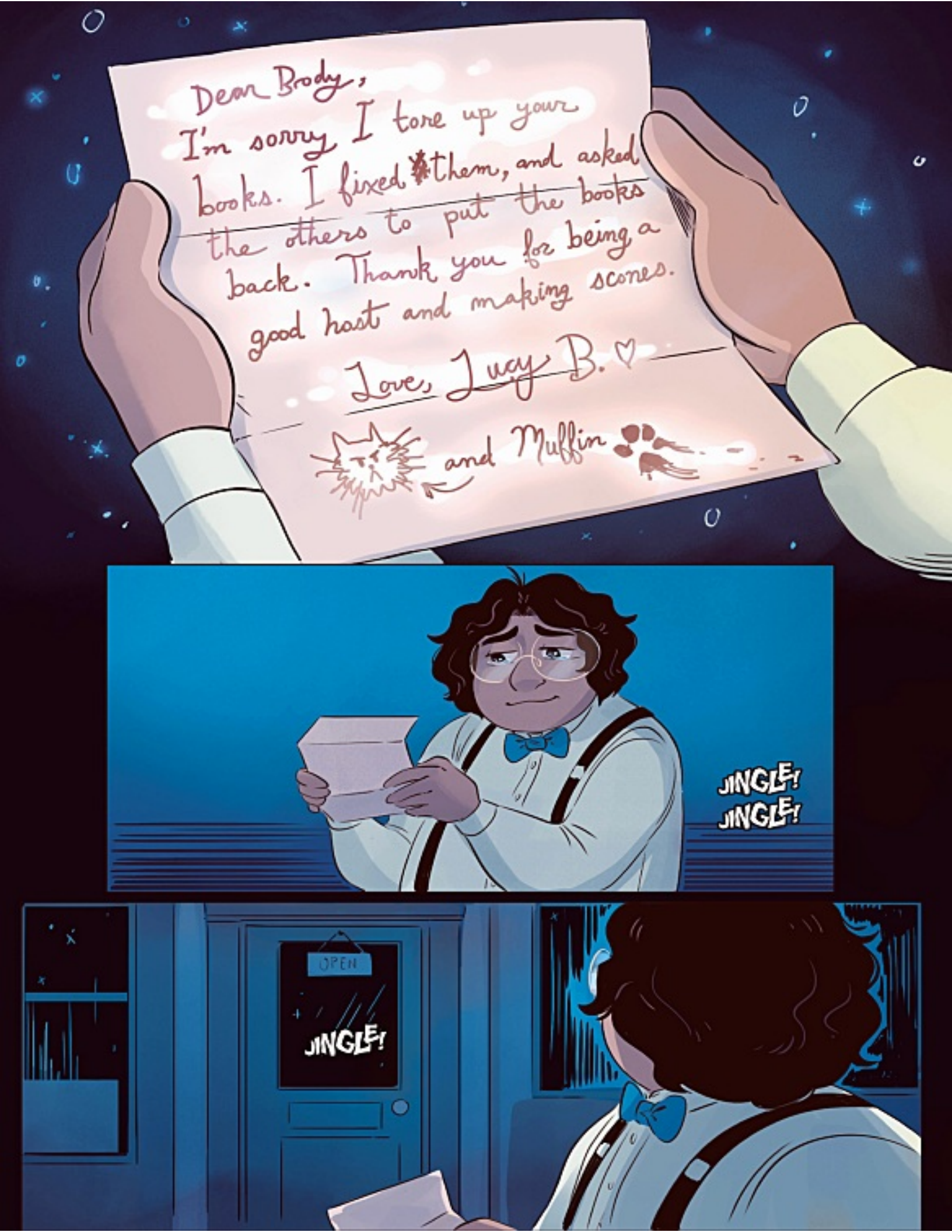
WHAT...
MORE...
...DO YOU WANT FROM ME?
WHAT MORE CAN I POSSIBLY DO FOR YOU...?
...COUGH...
COUGH, COUGH!
HACK-AAGHK!

DORIAN?
COUGH! HACK...
AHEM... AH, LUCY.
I-LOST TRACK OF YOU FOR A MOMENT. WHERE WERE YOU?
AT THE BOOK ROOK.
I'M SORRY ABOUT BRODY. I KNOW YOU LIKED HIM.
IT'S, AH...
AT ANY RATE, HOW ARE YOU?
I'M READY TO TALK TO PAPA NOW.

YOU ARE??
YES.
I'M SCARED OF WHAT HE MIGHT SAY...
BUT I WAS SCARED OF GRANNY LAZARUS, TOO. SO WHILE YOU WERE OUT, WE BOTH TALKED ABOUT WHY WE DIDN'T GET ALONG, AND SHE'S NOT ACTUALLY SCARY, AFTER ALL!
I FELT...BETTER, AFTER. I FELT AS GOOD AS WHEN YOU AND I WOULD HAVE OUR CONVERSATIONS TOGETHER, EXCEPT MY ROT CRUMBLED AWAY A BIT, ALL BY ITSELF THIS TIME!
AND THAT'S WHY I WANT TO TRY. BECAUSE PAPA'S NOT A SCARY WOLF. HE'S JUST MY PAPA, AND HE'S PROBABLY SCARED, TOO. SO I WANT TO UNDERSTAND HIS FEELINGS, THE SAME WAY I UNDERSTAND GRAN'S, NOW.
LUCY... I'M PROUD OF YOU.
TRYING TO UNDERSTAND SOMEONE WHO HURT YOU IS VERY BRAVE.

"I'M NOT BRAVE...I'M SCARED, ALL THE TIME."
CLOSED
"BUT YOU'VE DONE SO MUCH TO HELP ME, AND HELP THE OTHER GHOSTS, TOO."
SCRITCH, SCRITCH
"YOU DO IT ANYWAY..."

"...EVEN WHEN IT'S HARD, OR WHEN IT SCARES YOU."
"YOU TAUGHT ME HOW TO COPE, AND REPLACE MY BAD MEMORIES WITH GOOD ONES...
"AND YOU ALSO SHOWED ME HOW TO SIT WITH BAD FEELINGS, AND LEARN FROM THEM."
FLIP
H-HULLO? WHOEVER LEFT ME THIS NOTE, I WOULD LIKE TO READ IT NOW.
I, EHM, GIVE YOU MY PERMISSION, I SUPPOSE? TO COMMUNICATE WITH...ME...?


Dear Brody,
I'm sorry I tore up your books. I fixed them, and asked the others to put the books back. Thank you for being a good host and making scones.
Love, Lucy B. ♡
and Muffin
JINGLE!
JINGLE!
OPEN
JINGLE!

...I THOUGHT I KNEW WHAT I WANTED. BUT WHAT I ACTUALLY WANT IS TO BE LIKE YOU, DORIAN.
I WANT TO HELP PEOPLE FEEL BETTER... ONE STEP AT A TIME.
I'M SORRY I CAUSED YOU SO MUCH GRIEF BY HOLDING ON TO THE KEY.
BUT I WANT TO MAKE IT RIGHT. FOR YOU, AND FOR THE OTHERS.
COULD YOU HELP ME, DORIAN? ONE LAST TIME?
OF COURSE.

MR. CONALL. LUCY IS READY TO SPEAK WITH YOU NOW.
DORIAN... SOMETHING FEELS OFF.
I DON'T THINK THIS IS A GOOD IDEA ANYMORE...
NONSENSE, YOU'RE GOING TO BE FINE, LUCY.
I'LL BE RIGHT HERE IF YOU NEED ANY HELP.
SAY YOUR PIECE, THEN.

I JUST WANTED TO SAY I'M SORRY FOR BEING ANGRY WITH YOU, AND FOR BREAKING THINGS IN THE HOUSE.
I WAS SCARED TO GO TO LIMBO, AND I WANTED YOU TO COME WITH ME LIKE YOU SAID YOU WOULD, SO WHEN YOU DIDN'T...I WAS UPSET.
WHICH IS...FINE. YOU DON'T HAVE TO. I...I CAN BE BRAVE ENOUGH TO GO BACK ON MY OWN, OR WITH GRAN.
BUT BEFORE I GO...I WOULD LOVE TO SPEND SOME TIME WITH YOU, NOW THAT I'M WELL.
PLEASE?
YOU MAY WEAR MY LUCY'S FACE, AND SPEAK WITH HER VOICE...
...BUT YOU ARE NOT HER.
W-WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I AM LUCY! PAPA, PLEASE–
GASP!

P-PAPA! LET ME HOLD YOUR HAND AGAIN!
I'LL BE GOOD FROM NOW ON, I PROMISE.
HOW MUCH LONGER MUST I MOURN UNTIL YOU ARE SATISFIED?
HOW MANY TIMES MUST I BURY MY LOVED ONES, RELIVE THEIR LOSSES OVER AND OVER AGAIN, BEFORE I AM ALLOWED PEACE?
SIR, LUCY HAS GROWN SO MUCH IN THE TIME THAT I'VE KNOWN HER. SHE'S **WILLING** TO MOVE ON, BUT SHE CAN'T SHED THE REST OF HER ROT AND RETURN TO LIMBO UNTIL SHE TALKS TO YOU, AND GETS SOME CLOSURE.
YOU WANT CLOSURE? FINE. HERE'S YOUR CLOSURE, GHOST-EYED MAN.
I CAN'T DO THIS ANYMORE.
I POURED EVERYTHING INTO KEEPING LUCILLE ALIVE.
I HAVE NOTHING LEFT TO GIVE TO HER.
NOTHING LEFT TO GIVE **ANYONE**.

MY FAILURE TO MAKE HER WELL IS A BLIGHT UPON MY CONSCIENCE.
BUT I MOURN MY DAUGHTER AS SHE LIVED...
...NOT THIS WRAITH, WHO MAKES A MOCKERY OF MY PRECIOUS DAUGHTER'S MEMORY.
I WON'T LET YOU SPEAK TO HER THAT WAY! SHE'S YOUR DAUGHTER. SHE NEEDS YOU!
SHE "NEEDS" ME...THEY ALWAYS NEED ME, BUT IT'S NEVER ENOUGH, AND IT NEVER ENDS!
EVERY SHILLING I MADE WENT TO THE GREEVES FAMILY'S LATEST MIRACLE POTIONS, HOPING TO CURE MY WIFE AND CHILD.
MY REWARD WAS TO WATCH THEM DIE SLOWLY, AND THEN FACE THE IRE OF THEIR SUFFERING GHOSTS.
SO THAT'S WHY YOU MADE A DEAL WITH THE EXORCISTS??
BECAUSE YOU'VE GIVEN UP??
I'M PROTECTING MYSELF. IF THE GHOSTS SIMPLY LEFT ME BE, I WOULDN'T HAVE HAD TO RESORT TO IT.
BESIDES, THOSE GREEDY QUACKS RAISED THE PRICE OF HEXOCRINE ON ME.
I HAD TO RE-CREATE THAT COMPOUND BEFORE THOSE CON MEN COULD BANKRUPT ME.
BUT I COULDN'T GET THE RECIPE OUT OF THEM, AND COULDN'T PARSE IT ON MY OWN...
UNTIL I MET A VERY KNOWLEDGEABLE GHOST ONE DAY.

"A FORMER LAB WORKER FOR THE EXORCISTS...
*...AND A DISGRUNTLED CLIENT OF YOURS, DORIAN."
THAT GHOST WAS MORE THAN HAPPY TO GET ME THE RECIPE FOR HEXOCRINE...IN EXCHANGE FOR, IN ITS WORDS, "HEALING THAT WILL LAST."
IRONIC THAT THE FINAL, CRUCIAL INGREDIENT I WAS MISSING TO SUCCESSFULLY REPLICATE HEXOCRINE...
...WAS UNDERNEATH MY FEET ALL ALONG.

WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?
I "HEALED" THAT GHOST...
AND THE WRETCHED BANSHEE CALLED OWEN DUFFER...
...IN A WAY THAT WILL LAST AN ETERNITY.
YOU...YOU USED ME... TO MAKE-
W-WHY?
ALL THE BETTER TO PURGE A GHOST WITH, USING PARTS OF THE GHOST'S FORMER BODY.
WITH THIS LAST EXORCISM... I'LL FINALLY HAVE MY PEACE.
DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT PEACE FEELS LIKE, DORIAN?

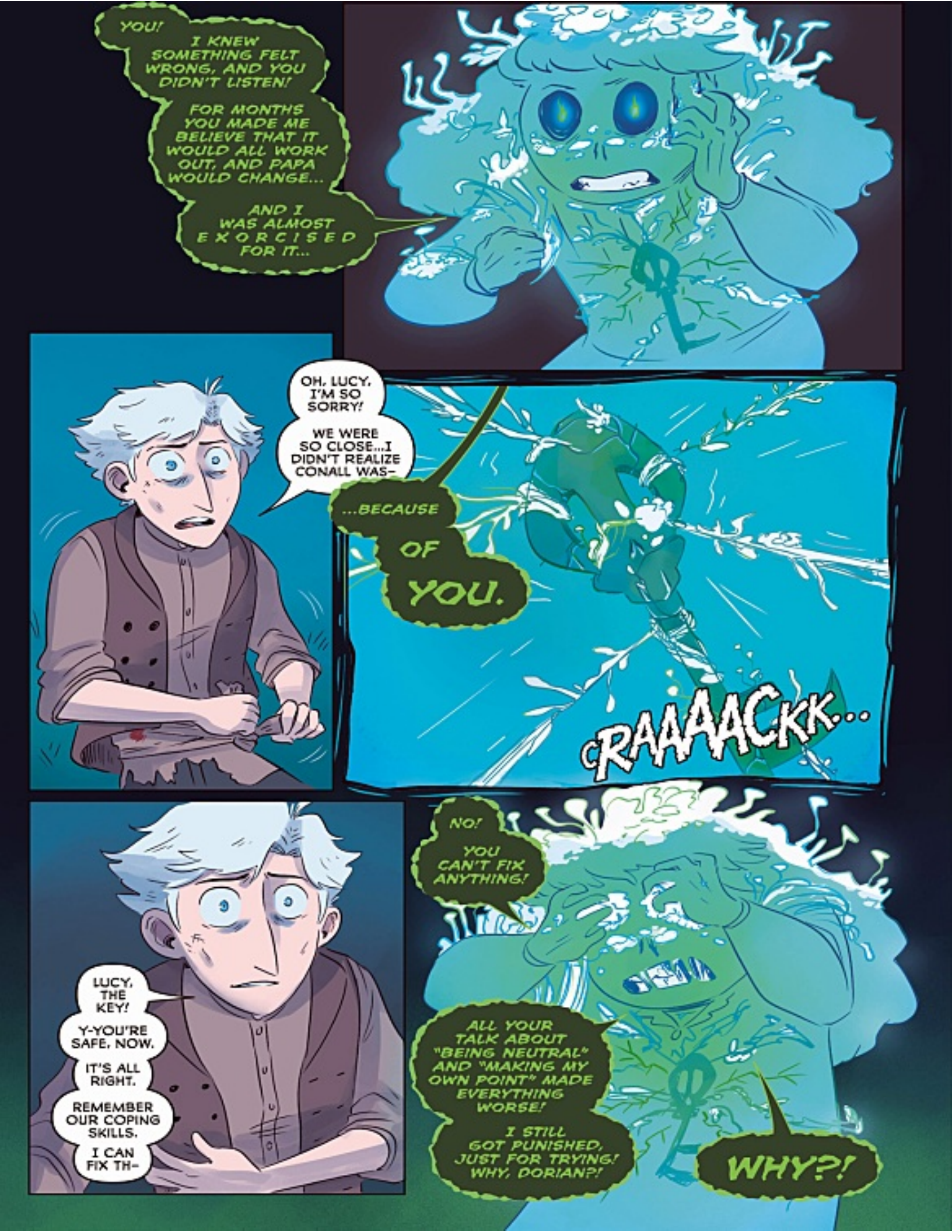
SO YOUR CONCERN ABOUT THE KEY TO DEATH'S DOOR, AND LUCY'S WELL-BEING...THAT WAS ALL A LIE??
NOT AT FIRST.
BUT THE GHOSTS LOCKED THEMSELVES OUT OF THEIR OWN AFTERLIFE. THEY WILL SUFFER FOR IT, NOT I.
AND I WILL NOT INDULGE YOUR GHOULISH SAVIOR COMPLEX ANY LONGER.
NO, WAIT, DON'T! H-HAVE YOU LOST YOUR MIND?!
I'M GIVING YOU ONE LAST CHANCE TO WALK AWAY.
WHAT WILL YOU CHOOSE, DORIAN?
THEIR SANITY...OR YOURS?
YOU'RE SICK. HOW COULD YOU DO THIS TO YOUR OWN CHILD??
"YOU WILL, TOO, ONE DAY...
"WHEN IT'S YOUR SPOUSE, AND YOUR CHILD.
"THEN YOU WILL UNDERSTAND WHY I DID WHAT I DID."
YOU EXORCISED MUM?!

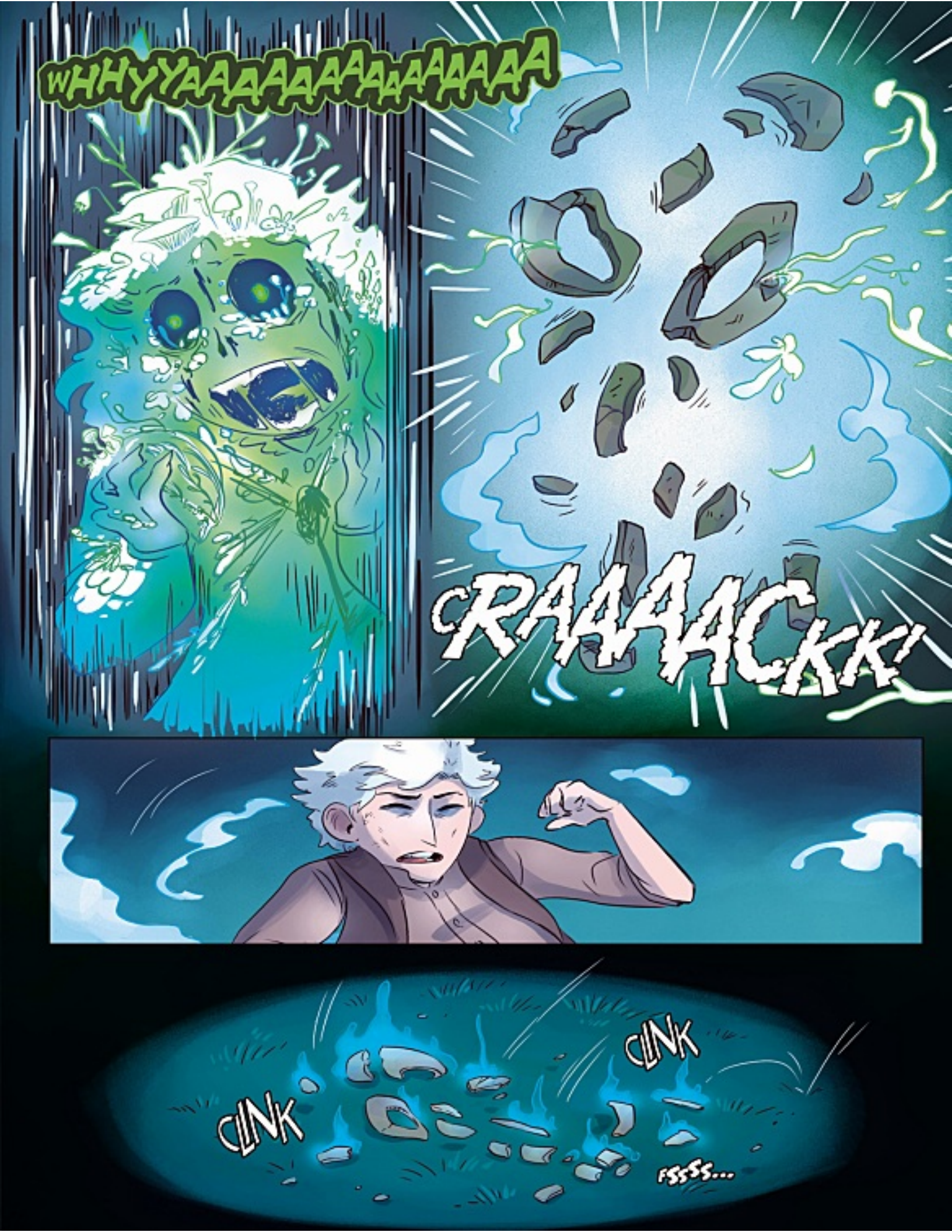
I SET HER FREE.
NO! NO!!!
KSSSSSSHHHHH!

NOOOOOOOOOO!!!
CRASH!
CRASH!
NGAH!
THIS WAY!

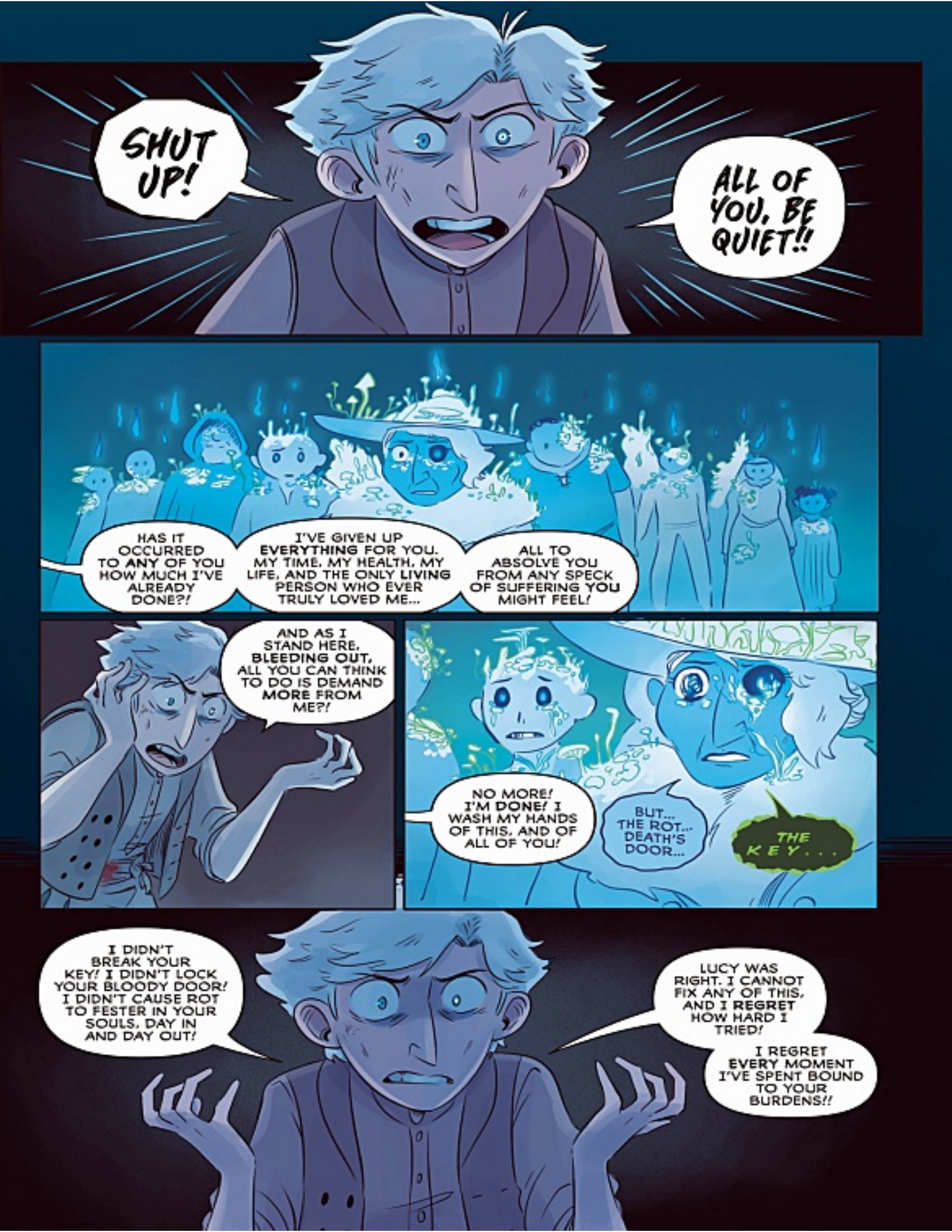
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF
HUFF

ENNGHE
GAH!
N-NO... NO NO NO NO...
IF I CAN JUST...
AGH!
M-MAKE IT... TO...TOWN...
L-LUCY? ARE YOU ALL RIGHT??
I DON'T UNDERSTAND...
I SAID... ALL THE RIGHT THINGS...
I TRIED SO HARD...TO BE BETTER...
AND IT STILL WASN'T ENOUGH?!


YOU!
I KNEW SOMETHING FELT WRONG, AND YOU DIDN'T LISTEN!
FOR MONTHS YOU MADE ME BELIEVE THAT IT WOULD ALL WORK OUT, AND PAPA WOULD CHANGE...
AND I WAS ALMOST EXORCISED FOR IT...
OH, LUCY. I'M SO SORRY!
WE WERE SO CLOSE...I DIDN'T REALIZE CONALL WAS-
...BECAUSE OF YOU.
cRAAAACkk...
NO!
YOU CAN'T FIX ANYTHING!
ALL YOUR TALK ABOUT "BEING NEUTRAL" AND "MAKING MY OWN POINT" MADE EVERYTHING WORSE!
I STILL GOT PUNISHED, JUST FOR TRYING! WHY, DORIAN?!
WHY?!
LUCY, THE KEY!
Y-YOU'RE SAFE, NOW.
IT'S ALL RIGHT.
REMEMBER OUR COPING SKILLS.
I CAN FIX TH-


WHHYYAAAAAAAAAAAAAA
CRAAACKK!
CLINK
CLINK
FSSSS...

DORIAN, WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN??
YOU NEED TO HEAL US. THE ROT IS-
DORIAN...
DORIAN!
I BROKE IT...
I...
BROKE...
LUCY!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!
DORIE! WHAT HAS SHE DONE?!
THE KEY, IT'S-
GET UP! YOU NEED TO GO AFTER LUCY!
YOU NEED TO FIX THIS!!
WAIT, CAN YOU TAKE AWAY MY ROT FIRST?
IT HURTS!
YOU KEPT ME WAITING!
THE KEY IS BROKEN?! AM I TRAPPED HERE FOREVER?!
YOU CAN FIX THIS, CAN'T YOU??
DORIAN, I JUST NEED A LITTLE HEALING...
DORIAN, HELP ME!
I NEED YOU!
DORIAN?!
I THOUGHT YOU HAD ABANDONED M-
DO SOMETHING!
DORIAN!
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR??
I CAN'T DO THIS WITHOUT YOU.


SHUT UP!
ALL OF YOU, BE QUIET!!
HAS IT OCCURRED TO ANY OF YOU HOW MUCH I'VE ALREADY DONE?!
I'VE GIVEN UP EVERYTHING FOR YOU. MY TIME. MY HEALTH. MY LIFE. AND THE ONLY LIVING PERSON WHO EVER TRULY LOVED ME...
ALL TO ABSOLVE YOU FROM ANY SPECK OF SUFFERING YOU MIGHT FEEL!
AND AS I STAND HERE, BLEEDING OUT, ALL YOU CAN THINK TO DO IS DEMAND MORE FROM ME?!
NO MORE! I'M DONE! I WASH MY HANDS OF THIS, AND OF ALL OF YOU!
BUT... THE ROT... DEATH'S DOOR...
THE KEY...
I DIDN'T BREAK YOUR KEY! I DIDN'T LOCK YOUR BLOODY DOOR! I DIDN'T CAUSE ROT TO FESTER IN YOUR SOULS, DAY IN AND DAY OUT!
LUCY WAS RIGHT. I CANNOT FIX ANY OF THIS, AND I REGRET HOW HARD I TRIED!
I REGRET EVERY MOMENT I'VE SPENT BOUND TO YOUR BURDENS!!

JUST LEAVE ME ALO–
COUGH!
COUGH, COUGH!
HAAAACK!
SHUFFE...
ENNGHE...
AAAAAAAAAA!!!
sHRRRRIEEEEEEEEK!!
EEEEEEEEEEEnnnnnYAAAAAAAA!!

DORIAAAAAN
DORIAN
NO!!
DORIAAAAAAAAAN!!
SHRIIIIEEEEEEEEEEK!!

THIS ISN'T REAL... IT'S NOT REAL...
IT'S NOT REAL, IT'S NOT REAL IT'S-
S-SOMEONE!
SOMEONE, PLEASE! HELP ME!
CRAAASH!

SAVE ME, DORIAN...
COME BACK...
HELP ME...
NO, DON'T LEAVE MEEE...
I CAN'T.
I CAN'T.
I... CA...
JINGLE, JING

JINGLE!
JINGLE!
JINGLE!
MUFF...IN?
B-BRODY... DOCTOR GREEVES?
DORIAN-!

POP!
MIND YOUR HEAD!
CLINK
SKREEEEEEEEEEE!!

GRAAAAHH!

SHUFF
SSHRIEEE
SHUFF

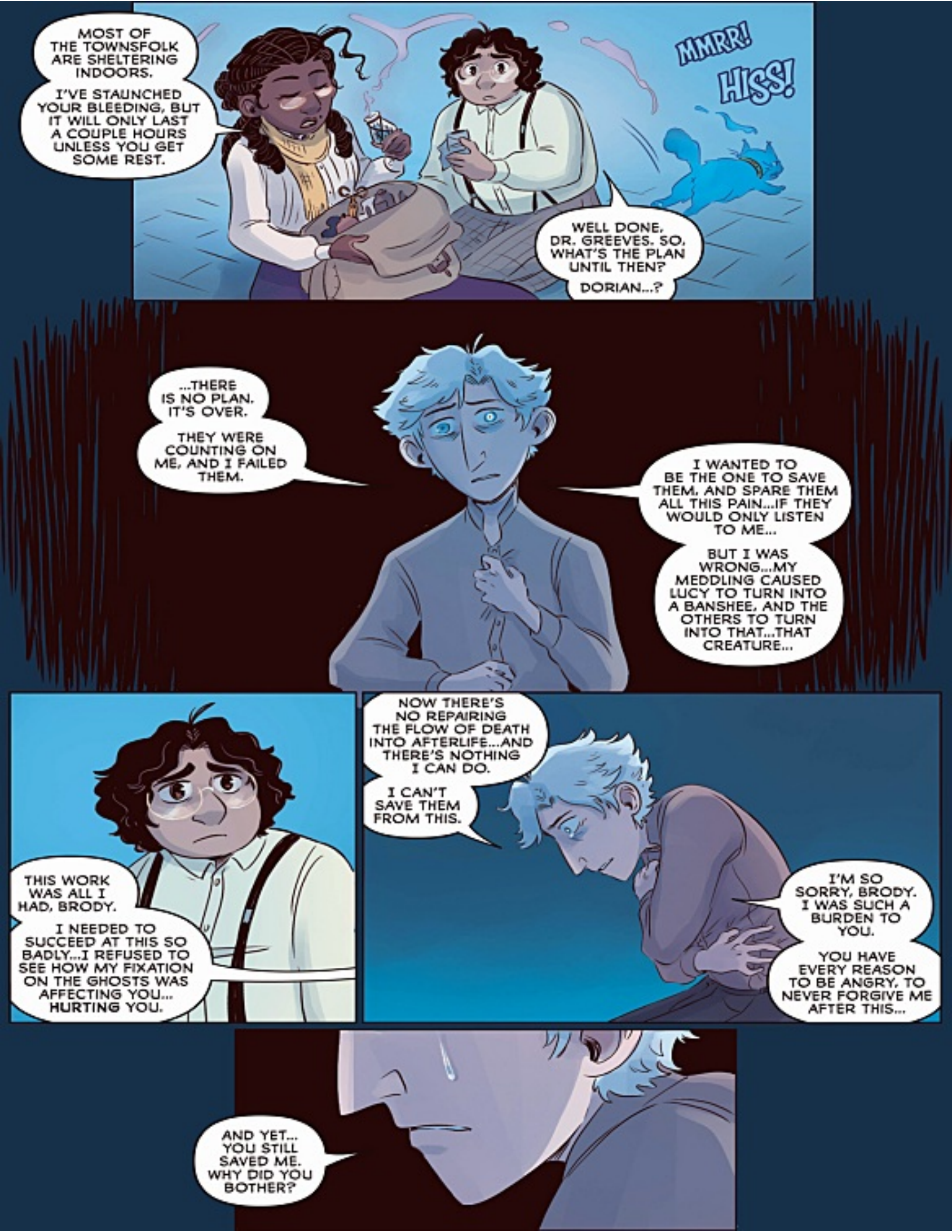
HUFF
GASP...

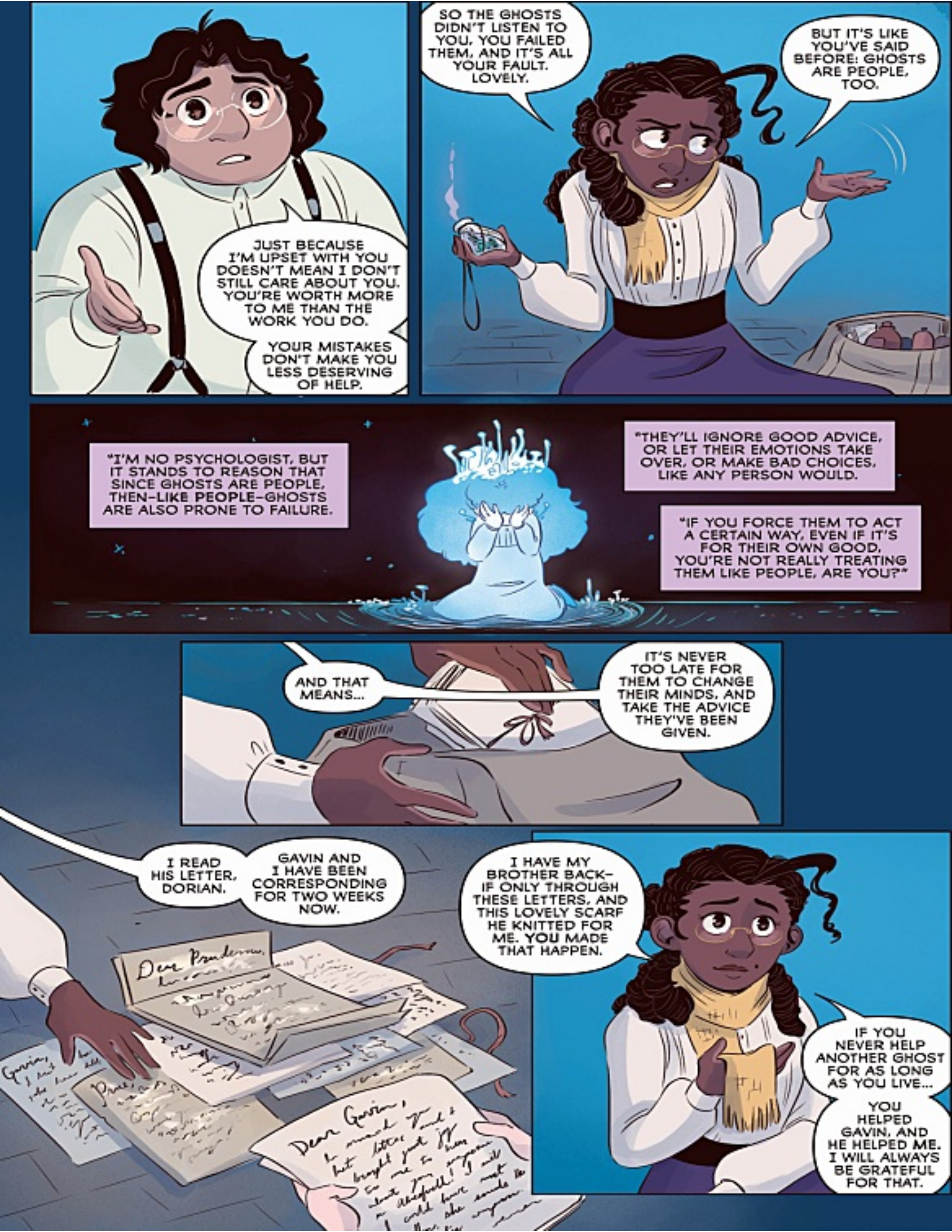
HUFF...
HUFF...
HIYA.

BRODY!
I HAVE SO MANY QUESTIONS!
AND SO, SO MANY APOLOGIES TO MAKE TO YOU-

DORIAN, I'M GLAD WE FOUND YOU!
LET'S GO BEFORE THAT THING COMES BA-
ACH- W-WHY ARE YOU YELLING??
WE STUFFED OUR EARS WITH COTTON TO KEEP OUT THE SCREAMING.
HERE, TAKE SOME.
NO, NO... IT'S NOT REAL...IT'S NOT REAL...
I T ' S...
HIS EYES. HE'S STILL GOT THE MADNESS, DOC...
NOT...
RE...AL...
ACH!! BLOODY HELL, DORIAN! WHEN DID THIS HAPPEN?!
LET'S GET HIM PATCHED UP. FOLLOW ME.
DOCTOR, PLEASE TALK NORMALLY.
THE BANSHEES-THAT CREATURE-THESE BOUTS OF MADNESS...
THIS IS ALL DORIAN LEITH'S FAULT. IT HAS TO BE!
HE'S CURSED, I TELL YOU!

AND DR. GREEVES IS A FOOL IF SHE THINKS HER BOTTLES OF TWIGS WILL PROTECT THE TOWN.
HECTOR, GO TO THE LAB'S STOCKPILE.
FIND WHOEVER IS LEFT OUT THERE, AND BRING BACK THE HEXOCRINE.
HOW MUCH OF IT, SIR?
ALL OF IT.
B-BUT-!
NOW.
IN THE MEANTIME...
...I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE GHOST-EYED MAN.
TAK, TAK
OLD MILL ASYLUM
WHEN THAT FIRST BANSHEE APPEARED, IT WAS CHAOS HERE IN TOWN.
THE SCREAMS DROVE US ALL OUT OF OUR HEADS. WHEN IT RAN OFF AND THE MADNESS PASSED, MR. BRINGHURST TOLD ME WHAT HE'D LEARNED ABOUT THE BANSHEES. WE KNEW WE HAD TO FIND YOU.
MUFFIN GETS SOME CREDIT, TOO. HER BELL COLLAR LED US STRAIGHT TO YOU, BRAVE LASS!
MMHRR.


MOST OF THE TOWNSFOLK ARE SHELTERING INDOORS.
I'VE STAUNCHED YOUR BLEEDING, BUT IT WILL ONLY LAST A COUPLE HOURS UNLESS YOU GET SOME REST.
MMRR!
HISS!
WELL DONE, DR. GREEVES. SO, WHAT'S THE PLAN UNTIL THEN?
DORIAN...?
...THERE IS NO PLAN. IT'S OVER.
THEY WERE COUNTING ON ME, AND I FAILED THEM.
I WANTED TO BE THE ONE TO SAVE THEM, AND SPARE THEM ALL THIS PAIN...IF THEY WOULD ONLY LISTEN TO ME...
BUT I WAS WRONG...MY MEDDLING CAUSED LUCY TO TURN INTO A BANSHEE, AND THE OTHERS TO TURN INTO THAT...THAT CREATURE...
THIS WORK WAS ALL I HAD, BRODY.
I NEEDED TO SUCCEED AT THIS SO BADLY...I REFUSED TO SEE HOW MY FIXATION ON THE GHOSTS WAS AFFECTING YOU... HURTING YOU.
NOW THERE'S NO REPAIRING THE FLOW OF DEATH INTO AFTERLIFE...AND THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO.
I CAN'T SAVE THEM FROM THIS.
I'M SO SORRY, BRODY. I WAS SUCH A BURDEN TO YOU.
YOU HAVE EVERY REASON TO BE ANGRY, TO NEVER FORGIVE ME AFTER THIS...
AND YET... YOU STILL SAVED ME. WHY DID YOU BOTHER?


JUST BECAUSE I'M UPSET WITH YOU DOESN'T MEAN I DON'T STILL CARE ABOUT YOU. YOU'RE WORTH MORE TO ME THAN THE WORK YOU DO.
YOUR MISTAKES DON'T MAKE YOU LESS DESERVING OF HELP.
SO THE GHOSTS DIDN'T LISTEN TO YOU. YOU FAILED THEM. AND IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT. LOVELY.
BUT IT'S LIKE YOU'VE SAID BEFORE: GHOSTS ARE PEOPLE, TOO.
"I'M NO PSYCHOLOGIST, BUT IT STANDS TO REASON THAT SINCE GHOSTS ARE PEOPLE, THEN–LIKE PEOPLE–GHOSTS ARE ALSO PRONE TO FAILURE.
"THEY'LL IGNORE GOOD ADVICE, OR LET THEIR EMOTIONS TAKE OVER, OR MAKE BAD CHOICES, LIKE ANY PERSON WOULD.
"IF YOU FORCE THEM TO ACT A CERTAIN WAY, EVEN IF IT'S FOR THEIR OWN GOOD, YOU'RE NOT REALLY TREATING THEM LIKE PEOPLE, ARE YOU?"
AND THAT MEANS...
IT'S NEVER TOO LATE FOR THEM TO CHANGE THEIR MINDS, AND TAKE THE ADVICE THEY'VE BEEN GIVEN.
I READ HIS LETTER, DORIAN.
GAVIN AND I HAVE BEEN CORRESPONDING FOR TWO WEEKS NOW.
Dear Prudence,
Dear Gavin,
I HAVE MY BROTHER BACK– IF ONLY THROUGH THESE LETTERS, AND THIS LOVELY SCARF HE KNITTED FOR ME. YOU MADE THAT HAPPEN.
IF YOU NEVER HELP ANOTHER GHOST FOR AS LONG AS YOU LIVE...
YOU HELPED GAVIN, AND HE HELPED ME. I WILL ALWAYS BE GRATEFUL FOR THAT.

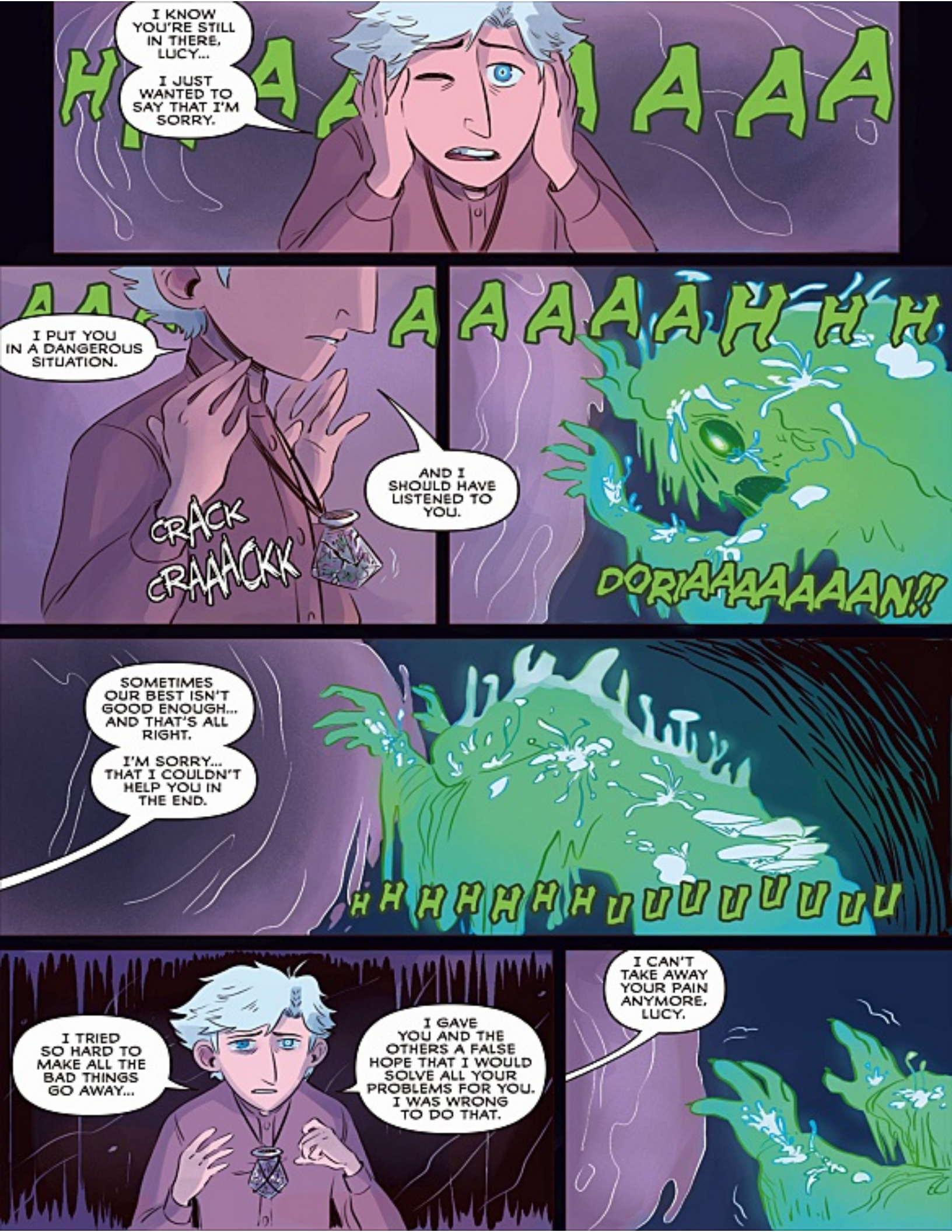
THANK YOU.
I'M SO SORRY, DR. GREEVES. I WAS HORRIBLE TO YOU BEFORE, BUT THE TRUTH IS...YOUR INVENTION SAVED MY LIFE.
FOR SO LONG, I'VE REFUSED TO PUT UP ANY WALLS BETWEEN ME AND THE GHOSTS, THINKING IT WOULD BE CRUEL OF ME TO DENY THEM IN THEIR TIME OF NEED.
BUT I WAS WRONG.
I'D FORGOTTEN HOW NICE IT FEELS...TO HAVE...
SPACE.
I KNOW HOW MUCH THIS MEANS TO YOU, DORIAN. YOU WANT TO TAKE CARE OF THEM SO MUCH, YOU MAKE YOURSELF SICK OVER IT.
I KNOW...
NOW IT'S UP TO THEM TO DO THE REST OF THE WORK THEMSELVES.
CAN'T THAT BE GOOD ENOUGH FOR THEM? GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU?

SHRIIIIEEEEEEEEEEK!!
BRODY...PLEASE TAKE DR. GREEVES AND GET TO SAFETY. I'LL HANDLE THINGS FROM HERE.
YOU NEVER ASKED TO BE DRAGGED ALONG ON THIS, THIS–
–THIS ADVENTURE?
NAH. FOR YOU, IT WAS WORTH IT.
I'M STAYING WITH YOU, AND PLAN TO SEE THIS THROUGH TO THE END. BUT HONESTLY, DORIAN?
IF YOU WANTED IT TO BE OVER...
IF YOU WANTED TO WALK AWAY FROM ALL THIS... RIGHT NOW...
YOU COULD.
YOU'RE RIGHT...I COULD. BUT THIS ISN'T OVER YET
THERE'S ONE LAST THING I CAN DO FOR THEM.

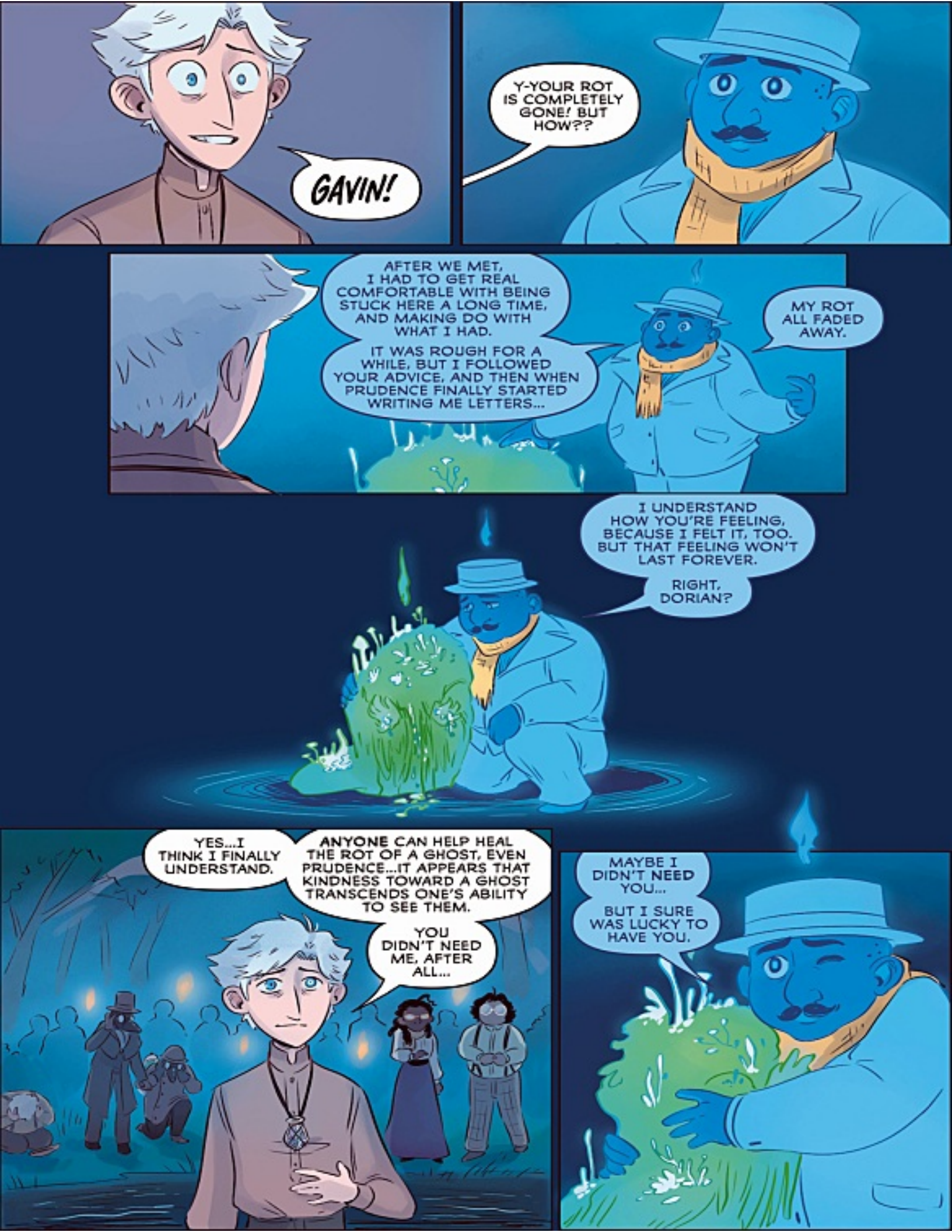
CAW!
CAW!
CAW!
CAW!
CAW!
CAW!
CAW!
CAW!
LUCY...
IT'S ME, DORIAN.

SHRIEEEEEHHHHH
E E E E E E E E E
E E E E
CRACK!
E E E E E E E E E
FWOOSH!

THERE IT IS!
IT'S THE BANSHEE!
SAUL, WAIT! LET DORIAN–
DORIAN?! NO. I'M SICK OF YOU BETTING ALL OUR LIVES ON THAT LOON!
WE NEED TO DESTROY THAT THING.
ON MY SIGNAL!
SCREEEEEEAAAAHHHHH
AAGH! GET IT OFF! MAKE IT STOP!!
HELP ME!!
SCRATCH, SCRATCH, SCRATCH
DORIAAAAAN


I KNOW YOU'RE STILL IN THERE, LUCY...
I JUST WANTED TO SAY THAT I'M SORRY.
AAAA
I PUT YOU IN A DANGEROUS SITUATION.
CRACK
CRAAACKK
AND I SHOULD HAVE LISTENED TO YOU.
AAAAAAHHHH
DORIAAAAAAAN!!
SOMETIMES OUR BEST ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH... AND THAT'S ALL RIGHT.
I'M SORRY... THAT I COULDN'T HELP YOU IN THE END.
HHHHHHHHUUUUUUUUU
I TRIED SO HARD TO MAKE ALL THE BAD THINGS GO AWAY...
I GAVE YOU AND THE OTHERS A FALSE HOPE THAT I WOULD SOLVE ALL YOUR PROBLEMS FOR YOU. I WAS WRONG TO DO THAT.
I CAN'T TAKE AWAY YOUR PAIN ANYMORE, LUCY.

HHHUUUHUUHUUHUU...
AAAAAAAA...
SOB...
SOB...
JINGLE!
HEY, THERE.
ARE YOU TRAPPED HERE, TOO? IT'S SCARY, I KNOW...


GAVIN!
Y-YOUR ROT IS COMPLETELY GONE! BUT HOW??
AFTER WE MET, I HAD TO GET REAL COMFORTABLE WITH BEING STUCK HERE A LONG TIME, AND MAKING DO WITH WHAT I HAD.
IT WAS ROUGH FOR A WHILE, BUT I FOLLOWED YOUR ADVICE, AND THEN WHEN PRUDENCE FINALLY STARTED WRITING ME LETTERS...
MY ROT ALL FADED AWAY.
I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU'RE FEELING, BECAUSE I FELT IT, TOO. BUT THAT FEELING WON'T LAST FOREVER.
RIGHT, DORIAN?
YES...I THINK I FINALLY UNDERSTAND.
ANYONE CAN HELP HEAL THE ROT OF A GHOST, EVEN PRUDENCE...IT APPEARS THAT KINDNESS TOWARD A GHOST TRANSCENDS ONE'S ABILITY TO SEE THEM.
YOU DIDN'T NEED ME, AFTER ALL...
MAYBE I DIDN'T NEED YOU...
BUT I SURE WAS LUCKY TO HAVE YOU.

I'M...S... SCARED...
W... WHAT....
AM I... GOING TO... DO...?
SIT WITH THE FEAR...THE ANGER...THE GRIEF...
AND THEN... INVITE THOSE FEELINGS TO LEAVE.
DORIAN...
I... AM...
WE...
ARE... SO...RRY...

I'M SORRY, TOO.
THE KEY MAY BE GONE, BUT ALL OF YOU ARE STILL HERE. YOU HAVE ENDURED SO MUCH...
...AND YOU WILL BE ABLE TO ENDURE THIS, TOO.
THE MEMORIES, THE PAST EXPERIENCES THAT HAUNT YOUR HEARTS... ALL OF YOU CAN FEEL THEM, CAN'T YOU?
YOU HAVE A LOT OF THEM IN COMMON.

PLEASE... EVERYONE. I NEED YOUR HELP...
BECAUSE I CANNOT DO THIS ON MY OWN. I CANNOT TAKE YOUR PAIN AWAY.
BUT, BETWEEN ALL OF US...
THE ROT WILL BE MUCH EASIER TO BEAR.
ASTOUNDING.
IS ANYONE ELSE SEEING THIS, OR DO I STILL HAVE THE BANSHEE MADNESS?
I SEE IT, TOO! DORIAN IS CALMING THE BANSHEES!

STOP, WHAT ARE YOU-
AAAGHH!!
HECTOR!
THUMP!
SO THIS IS WHERE YOU'VE BEEN HIDING IT.

CLICK
WHIRRRR
CAW!
CAW!
CAW!
FSSSSSSHHH!!
SHRIEK!!

DORIAAN
FSSSSSSSHHH!!
HELP ME
C-COUGH...
WHEEZE...

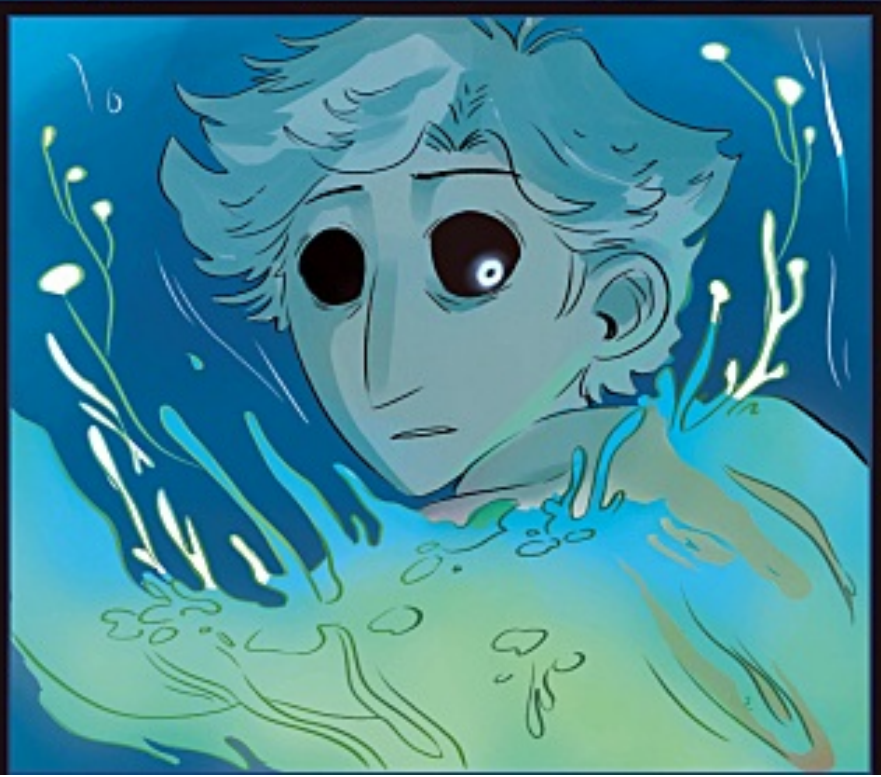
...COUGH...
SPLOOSH!
DORIAN!!
NOOOOOOOOOOO
OOOOOOOOOO
OOOO...

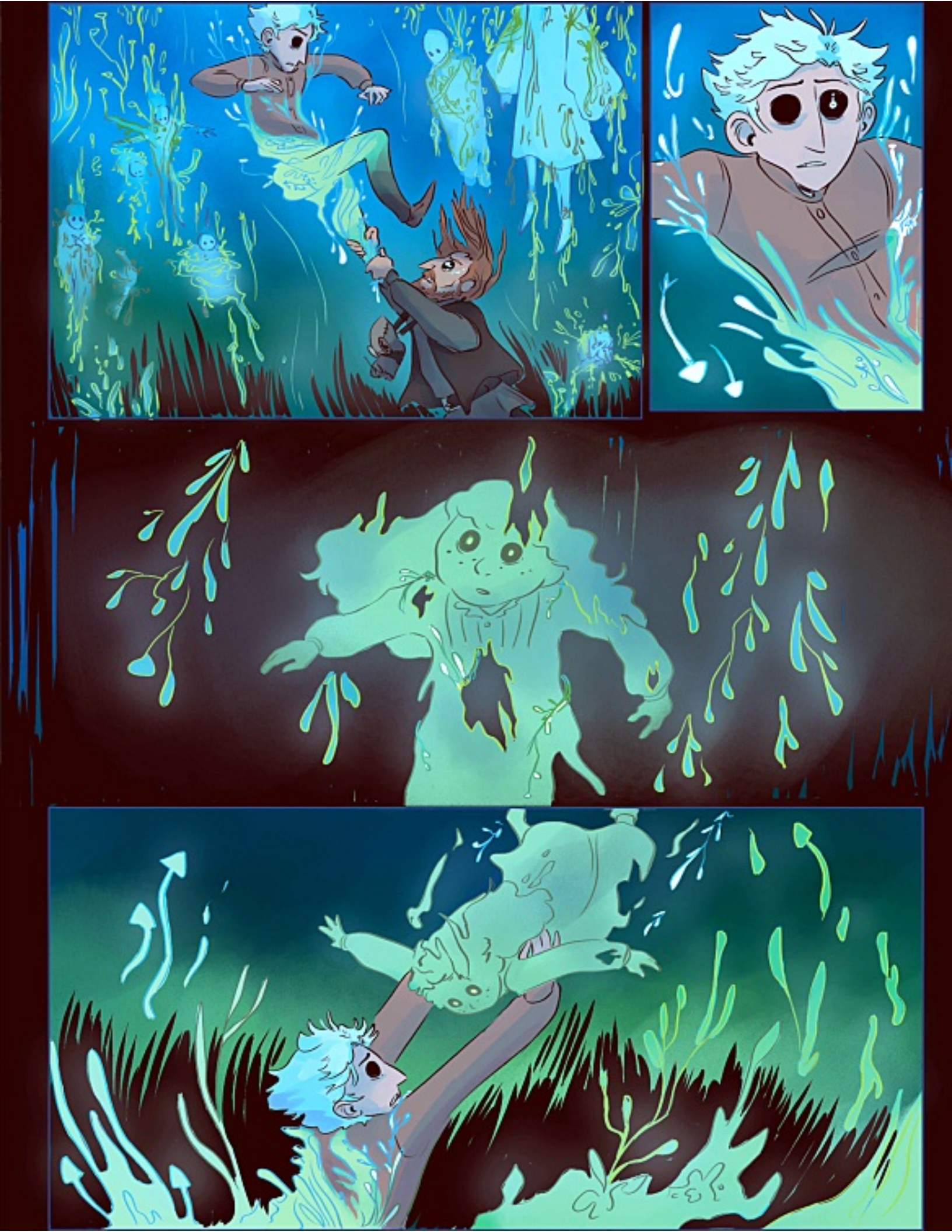
HEXOCRINE BE DAMNED!
DORIAN, LUCY! I'M COMING!
NO!

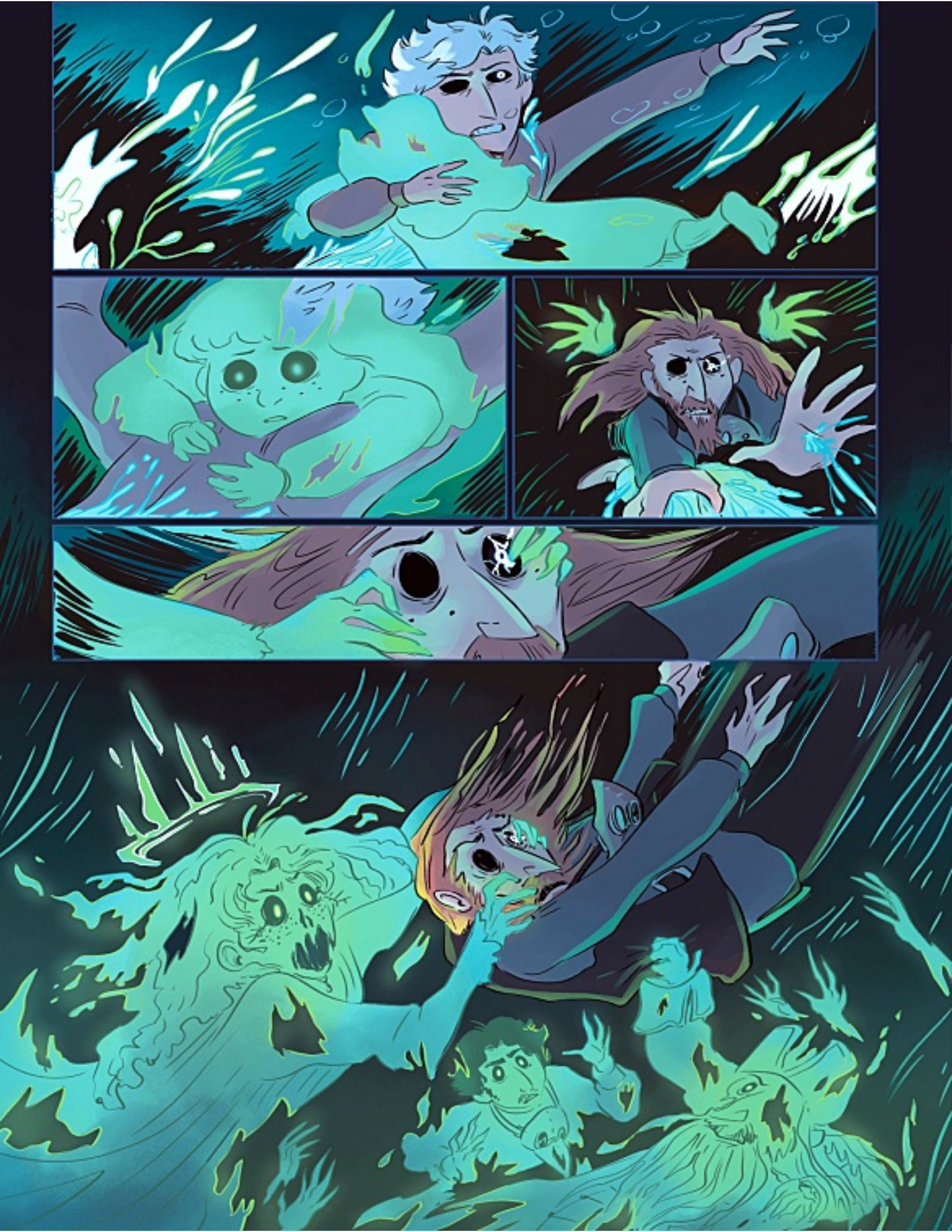
PULL!
CONALL BAIN! STOP THIS AT ONCE!!
CAW!
CAW!
CAW!
CAW!
AGHH!
CRACK!

AAAAAAGGHHH!!
PULL!

WHERE
AM I?
A...BOG... FILLED WITH ROT...
HOW... DID I GET HERE...?
I FEEL...
HEAVY.







SHR EEK!

WHAT HAVE I DONE?
MY GHOSTS...
THEY'RE GONE.
I NEED THEM.
THEY'RE COUNTING ON ME.
OR ARE THEY...
BETTER OFF...
WITHOUT ME?
I SHOULD HAVE–
IF I HAD DONE IT DIFFERENTLY–
HAVE TO GO B A C K...

THE WOLF...
IS JUST...
...A WOLF.
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK!

CLICK
CREEEEEEEEEAKK...

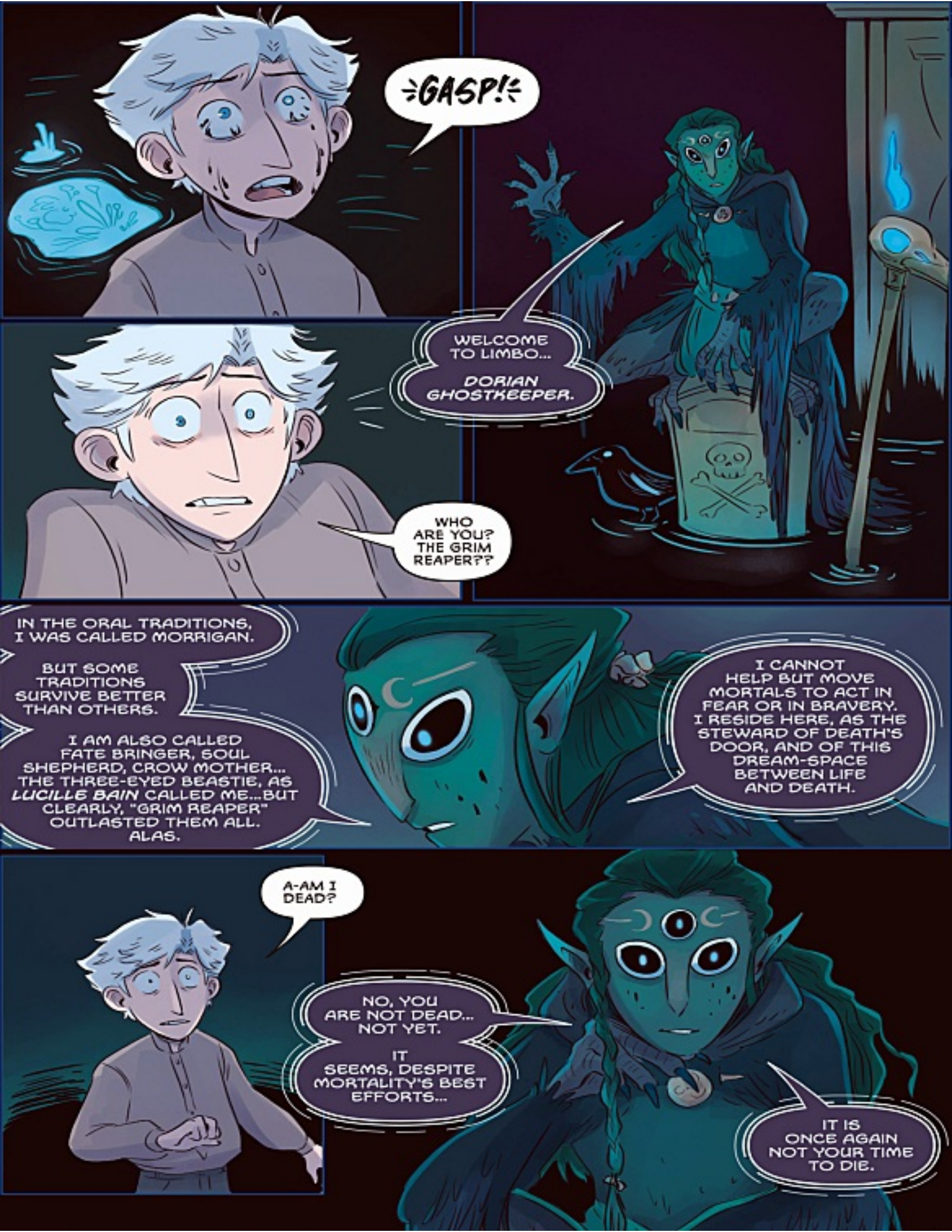
LUCILLE BAIN.
FOR LOCKING DEATH'S DOOR... STEALING AND SHATTERING ITS KEY...
...ARE YOU PREPARED...
TO RECEIVE YOUR PUNISHMENT?

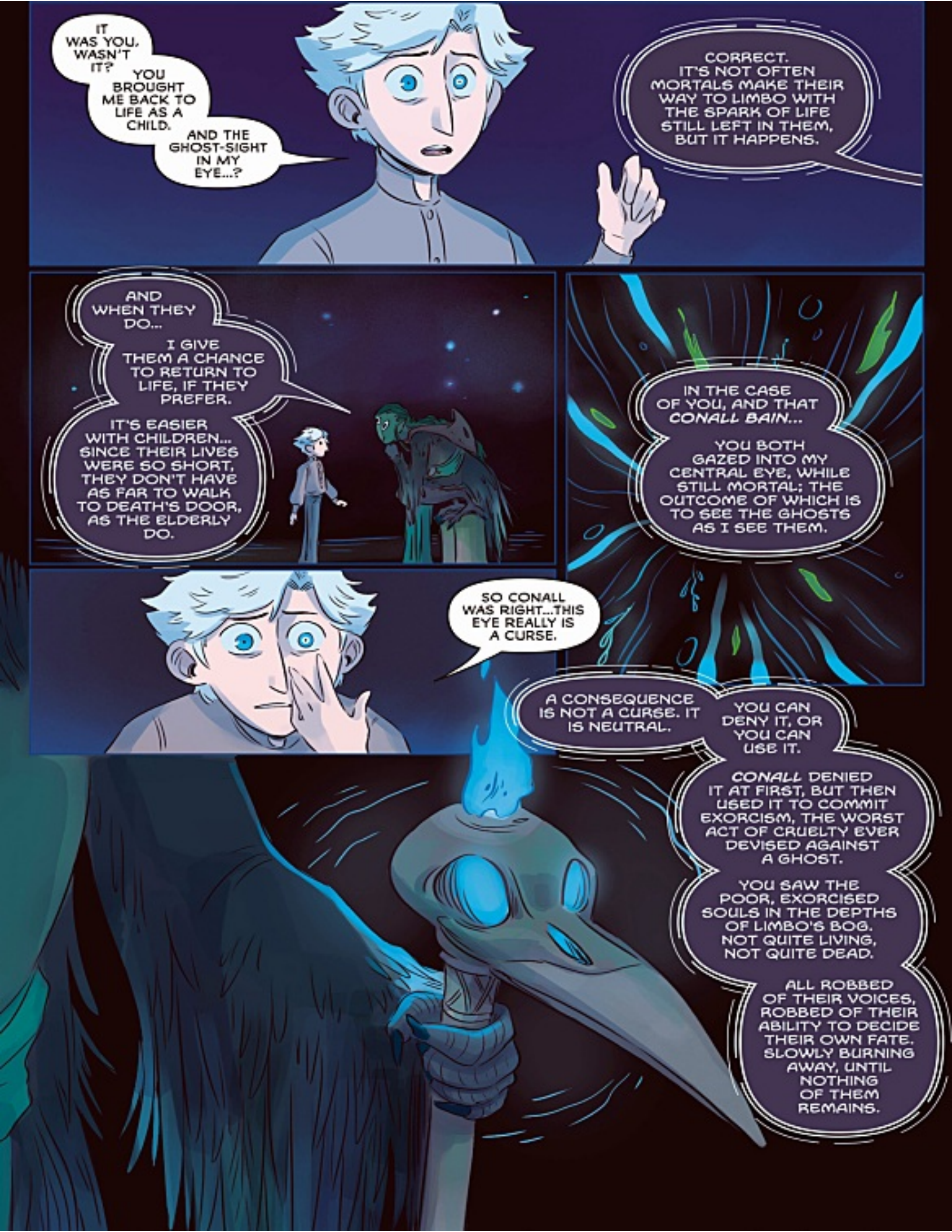
nod,
nod
VERY WELL.

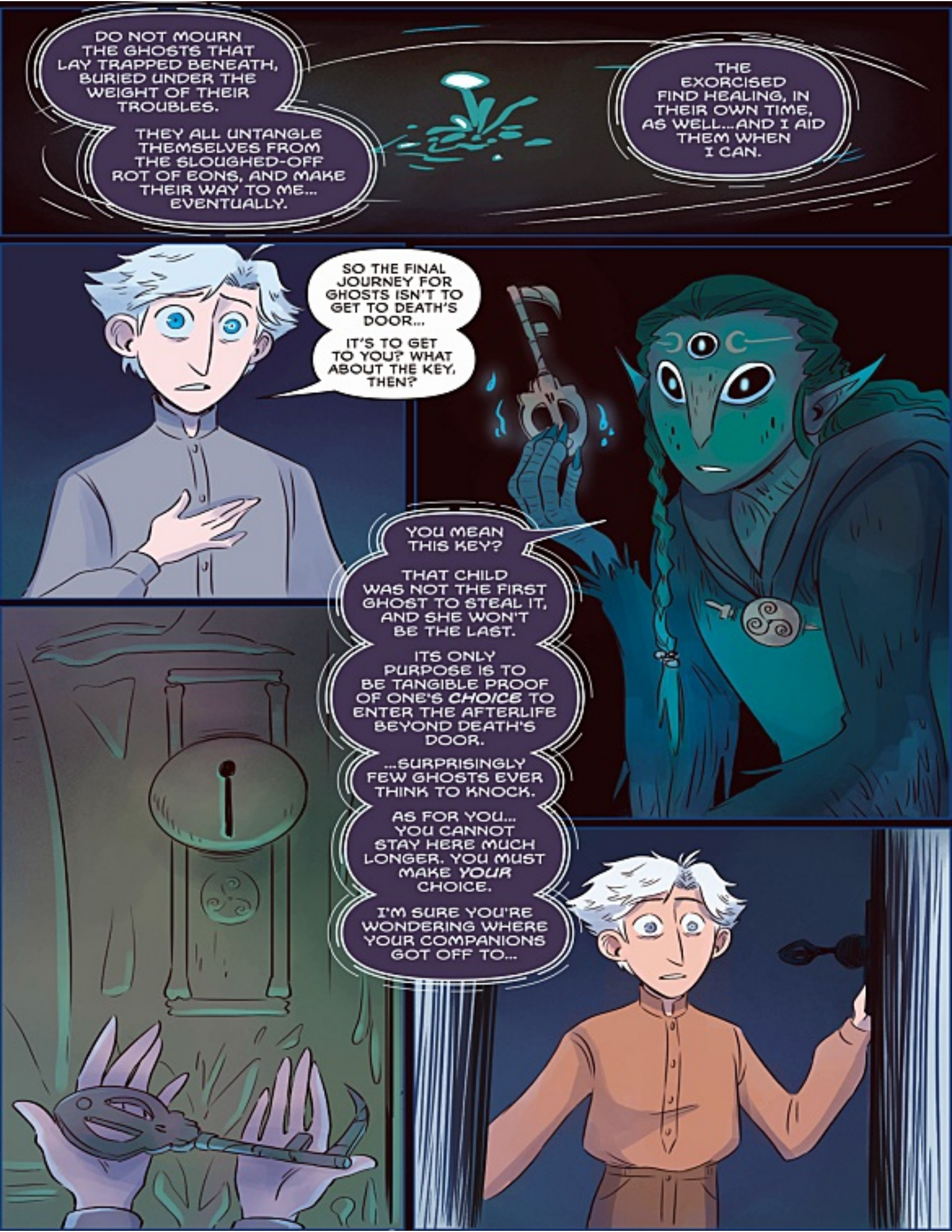
LUCILLE BAIN...
POOR CHILD...
YOUR BRIEF SOJOURN THROUGH MORTAL LIFE, AND YOUR PASSAGE THROUGH LIMBO, WERE PUNISHMENT ENOUGH. NO MORE.
HERE... YOU WILL FIND ONLY REST.
YOU SHOWED COURAGE...
BY ADMITTING YOUR MISTAKES, ACCEPTING THEIR CONSEQUENCES, AND FACING YOUR GREATEST FEARS.
AND YOU TOOK GOOD CARE OF MY SENTINEL CROWS.
EDGAR!!
TH-THANK YOU, MS. BEASTIE.
CALL ME MORRIGAN.
NOW... LAZARUS LEITH.
THE WORDS YOU CHOSE, IN LIFE AND IN DEATH, HAVE BEEN YOUR GREATEST BOON...
...AND YOUR BITTEREST CURSE.
YET, I SENSE THERE IS SOMETHING YOU'VE BEEN MEANING TO SAY FOR A WHILE, NOW...
I INVITE YOU TO SAY IT.

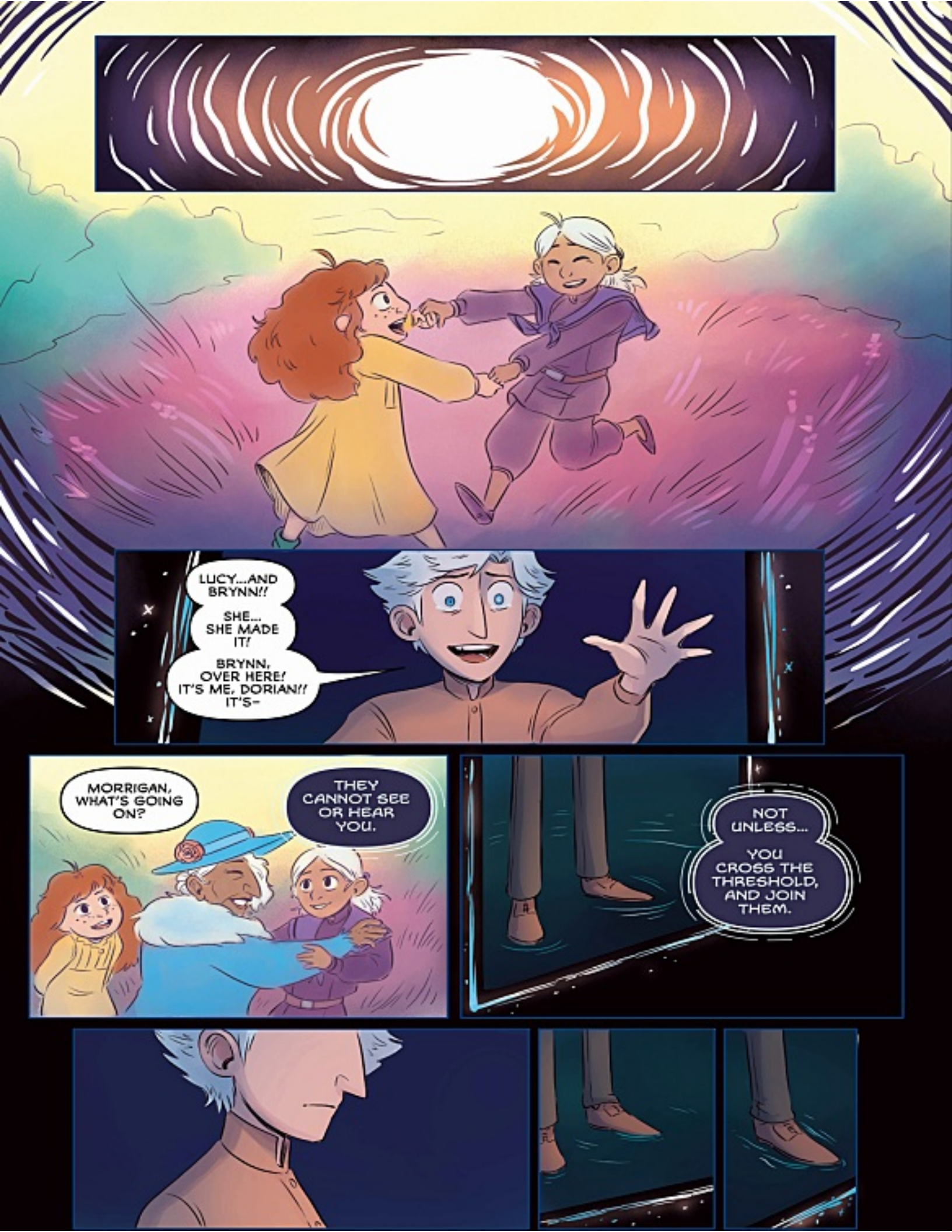
PLEASE! I BEG YOU TO SAVE MY GRANDSON!
I'LL DO ANYTHING! I'LL FORFEIT MY OWN PASSAGE THROUGH DEATH'S DOOR, IF IT MEANS HIS ROT CAN BE CURED!
NOBLE, BUT UNNECESSARY.
THE ROT HE BEARS IS NOT HIS OWN.
NOT HIS OWN...OH... OH, MY POOR DORIE.
I'M SO SORRY. I'VE BEEN SELFISH.
I-I FORCED MY PAIN ONTO YOU, AND DEMANDED FAR TOO MUCH OF YOU. I ONLY WANTED TO HELP, BUT I REALIZE NOW THAT...I NEEDED TO GIVE YOU SPACE...TO LET YOU MAKE YOUR OWN CHOICES.
NO MORE MEDDLING. NO MORE DEMANDS. I JUST HOPE THAT YOU CAN FORGIVE ME ONE DAY.
I'M DONE SCROUNGING UP THE SCRAPS OF MY OLD LIFE.
LUCY AND I MAKE A PROPER TEAM. THAT CONALL BAIN WASTED HIS CHANCE TO KNOW AND LOVE A BRAVE, BRILLIANT YOUNG LADY.
I'LL BE HER GRANDMOTHER, AND HER FATHER, THEN. WHATEVER HAPPENS, WE'LL LOOK OUT FOR EACH OTHER, AND SEE WHAT THIS AFTERLIFE BRINGS US.
SINCE YOU KNOCKED...
WOULD YOU LIKE TO COME INSIDE?

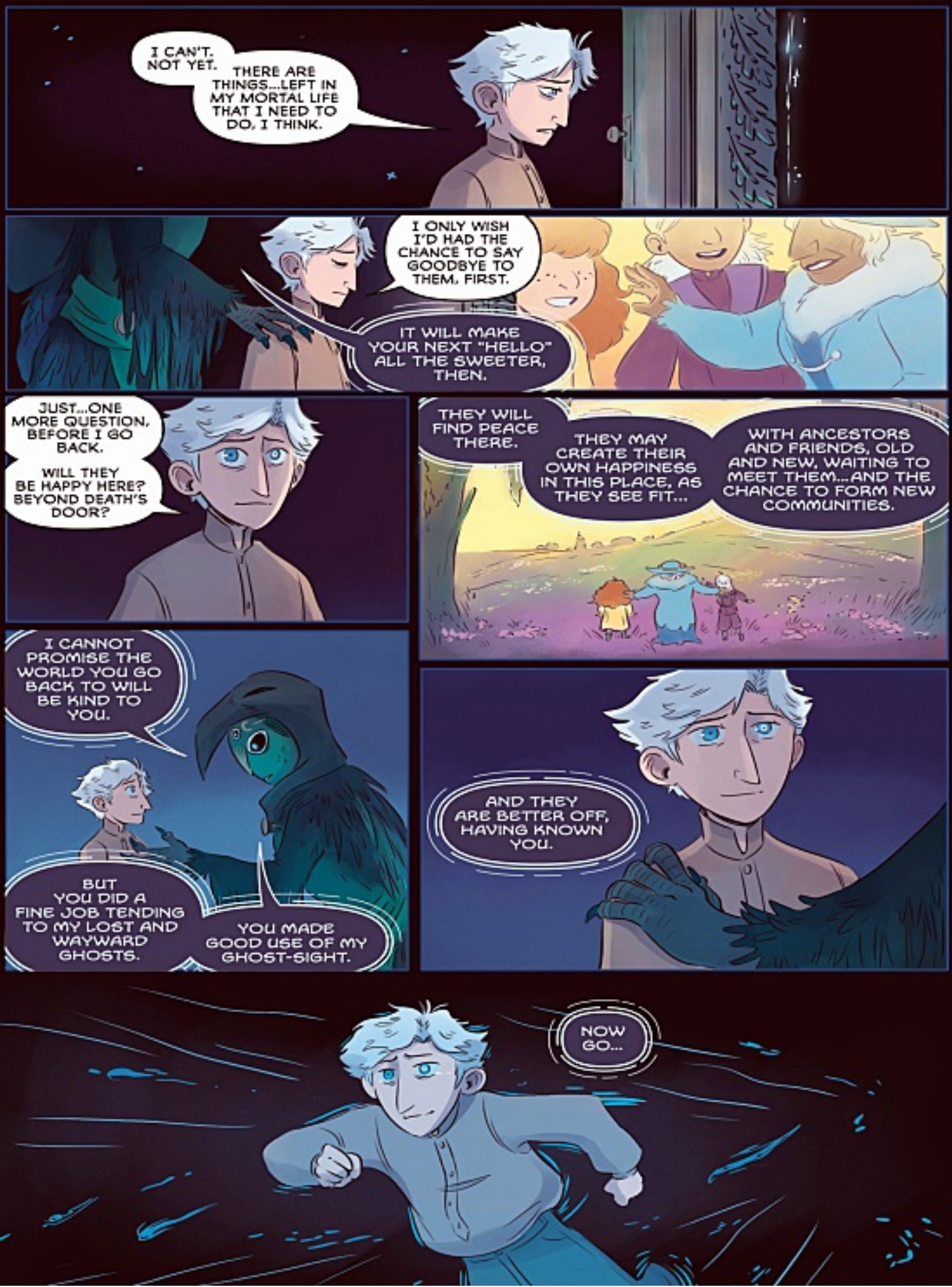
AND DORIAN LEITH.
THE MANTLE OF A SAVIOR WEIGHS HEAVILY ON YOU, CHILD.
YOUR INTENTIONS ARE GOOD, BUT YOU ARE NOT FATED TO CARRY THE DEAD'S BURDENS FOR THEM.
THAT BEING SAID...
ONLY THROUGH YOUR OWN POWER CAN YOU REMOVE THE BURDENS THAT YOU TAKE ON FROM OTHERS.
STAND. DO NOT LET THIS ROTTED CLOAK OF REGRET SINK YOU INTO THE BOG.
THERE IS NO LONGER ANY COMFORT TO BE FOUND IN THIS.
INSTEAD, LET THE WATERS OF LIMBO WASH THIS MANTLE AWAY.
IT WILL FEEL PAINFUL. YOU WILL FEEL ITS ABSENCE, AND YEARN TO DON IT AGAIN...
BUT TRUST THAT, WITHOUT IT...
YOU WILL KNOW TRUE PEACE.


GASP!
WELCOME TO LIMBO... DORIAN GHOSTKEEPER.
WHO ARE YOU? THE GRIM REAPER??
IN THE ORAL TRADITIONS, I WAS CALLED MORRIGAN.
BUT SOME TRADITIONS SURVIVE BETTER THAN OTHERS.
I AM ALSO CALLED FATE BRINGER, SOUL SHEPHERD, CROW MOTHER... THE THREE-EYED BEASTIE, AS *LUCILLE BAIN* CALLED ME...BUT CLEARLY, "GRIM REAPER" OUTLASTED THEM ALL. ALAS.
I CANNOT HELP BUT MOVE MORTALS TO ACT IN FEAR OR IN BRAVERY. I RESIDE HERE, AS THE STEWARD OF DEATH'S DOOR, AND OF THIS DREAM-SPACE BETWEEN LIFE AND DEATH.
A-AM I DEAD?
NO, YOU ARE NOT DEAD... NOT YET.
IT SEEMS, DESPITE MORTALITY'S BEST EFFORTS...
IT IS ONCE AGAIN NOT YOUR TIME TO DIE.


IT WAS YOU, WASN'T IT?
YOU BROUGHT ME BACK TO LIFE AS A CHILD.
AND THE GHOST-SIGHT IN MY EYE...?
CORRECT. IT'S NOT OFTEN MORTALS MAKE THEIR WAY TO LIMBO WITH THE SPARK OF LIFE STILL LEFT IN THEM, BUT IT HAPPENS.
AND WHEN THEY DO...
I GIVE THEM A CHANCE TO RETURN TO LIFE, IF THEY PREFER.
IT'S EASIER WITH CHILDREN... SINCE THEIR LIVES WERE SO SHORT, THEY DON'T HAVE AS FAR TO WALK TO DEATH'S DOOR, AS THE ELDERLY DO.
IN THE CASE OF YOU, AND THAT CONALL BAIN...
YOU BOTH GAZED INTO MY CENTRAL EYE, WHILE STILL MORTAL; THE OUTCOME OF WHICH IS TO SEE THE GHOSTS AS I SEE THEM.
SO CONALL WAS RIGHT...THIS EYE REALLY IS A CURSE.
A CONSEQUENCE IS NOT A CURSE. IT IS NEUTRAL.
YOU CAN DENY IT, OR YOU CAN USE IT.
CONALL DENIED IT AT FIRST, BUT THEN USED IT TO COMMIT EXORCISM, THE WORST ACT OF CRUELTY EVER DEVISED AGAINST A GHOST.
YOU SAW THE POOR, EXORCISED SOULS IN THE DEPTHS OF LIMBO'S BOG. NOT QUITE LIVING, NOT QUITE DEAD.
ALL ROBBED OF THEIR VOICES, ROBBED OF THEIR ABILITY TO DECIDE THEIR OWN FATE. SLOWLY BURNING AWAY, UNTIL NOTHING OF THEM REMAINS.


DO NOT MOURN THE GHOSTS THAT LAY TRAPPED BENEATH, BURIED UNDER THE WEIGHT OF THEIR TROUBLES.
THEY ALL UNTANGLE THEMSELVES FROM THE SLOUGHED-OFF ROT OF EONS, AND MAKE THEIR WAY TO ME... EVENTUALLY.
THE EXORCISED FIND HEALING, IN THEIR OWN TIME, AS WELL...AND I AID THEM WHEN I CAN.
SO THE FINAL JOURNEY FOR GHOSTS ISN'T TO GET TO DEATH'S DOOR...
IT'S TO GET TO YOU? WHAT ABOUT THE KEY, THEN?
YOU MEAN THIS KEY?
THAT CHILD WAS NOT THE FIRST GHOST TO STEAL IT, AND SHE WON'T BE THE LAST.
ITS ONLY PURPOSE IS TO BE TANGIBLE PROOF OF ONE'S *CHOICE* TO ENTER THE AFTERLIFE BEYOND DEATH'S DOOR.
...SURPRISINGLY FEW GHOSTS EVER THINK TO KNOCK.
AS FOR YOU... YOU CANNOT STAY HERE MUCH LONGER. YOU MUST MAKE *YOUR* CHOICE.
I'M SURE YOU'RE WONDERING WHERE YOUR COMPANIONS GOT OFF TO...

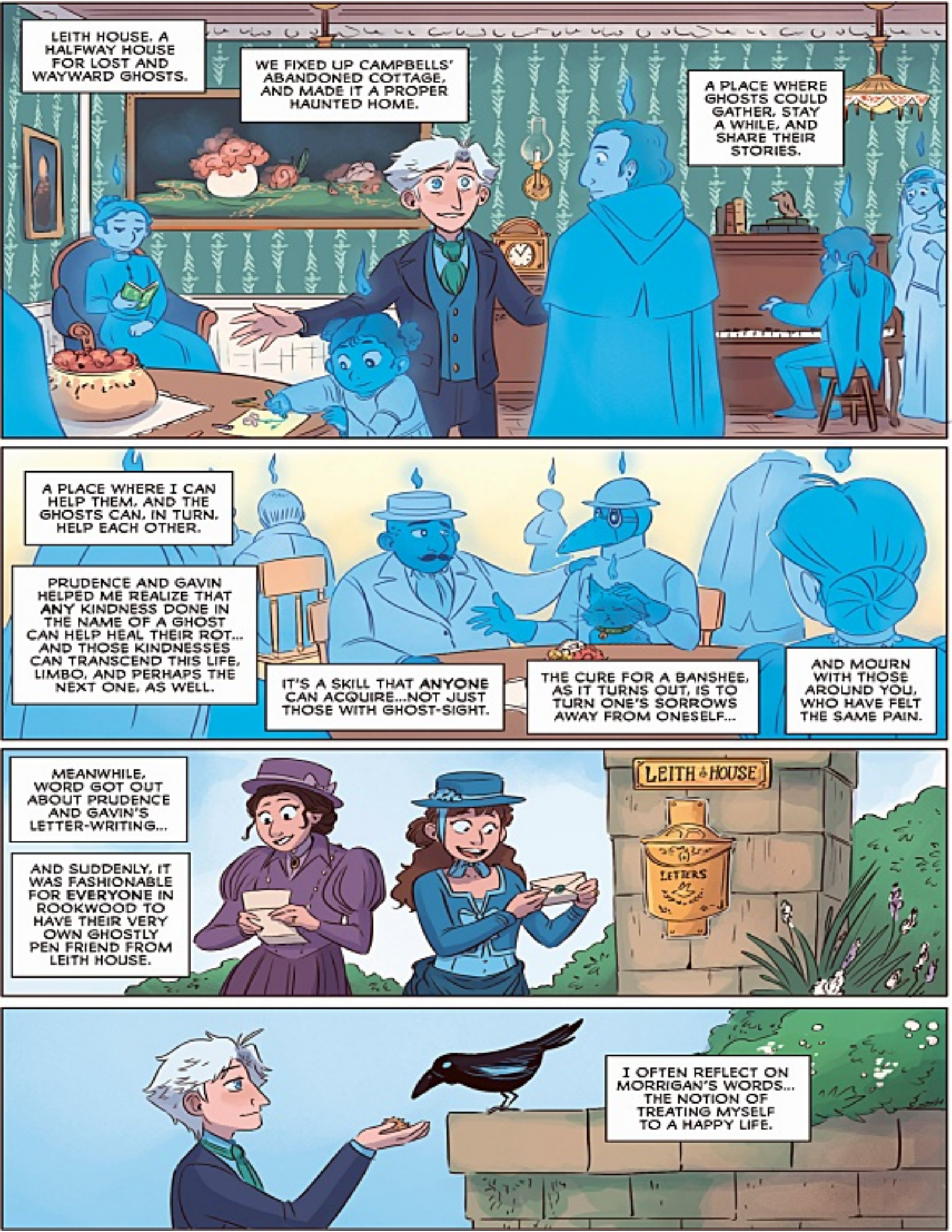

LUCY...AND BRYNN!!
SHE... SHE MADE IT!
BRYNN, OVER HERE! IT'S ME, DORIAN!! IT'S-
MORRIGAN, WHAT'S GOING ON?
THEY CANNOT SEE OR HEAR YOU.
NOT UNLESS...
YOU CROSS THE THRESHOLD, AND JOIN THEM.

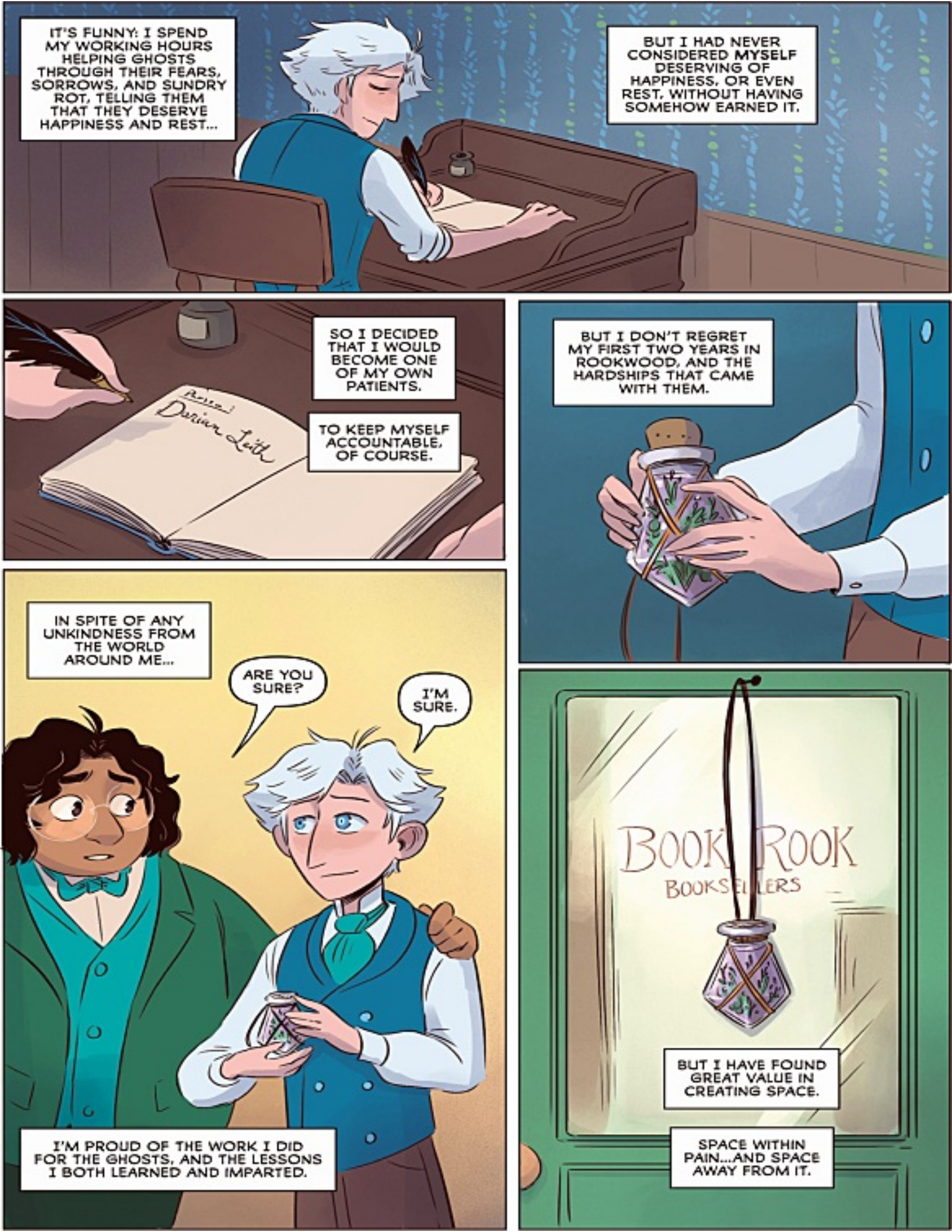

I CAN'T. NOT YET.
THERE ARE THINGS...LEFT IN MY MORTAL LIFE THAT I NEED TO DO, I THINK.
I ONLY WISH I'D HAD THE CHANCE TO SAY GOODBYE TO THEM, FIRST.
IT WILL MAKE YOUR NEXT "HELLO" ALL THE SWEETER, THEN.
JUST...ONE MORE QUESTION, BEFORE I GO BACK.
WILL THEY BE HAPPY HERE? BEYOND DEATH'S DOOR?
THEY WILL FIND PEACE THERE.
THEY MAY CREATE THEIR OWN HAPPINESS IN THIS PLACE, AS THEY SEE FIT...
WITH ANCESTORS AND FRIENDS, OLD AND NEW, WAITING TO MEET THEM...AND THE CHANCE TO FORM NEW COMMUNITIES.
I CANNOT PROMISE THE WORLD YOU GO BACK TO WILL BE KIND TO YOU.
BUT YOU DID A FINE JOB TENDING TO MY LOST AND WAYWARD GHOSTS.
YOU MADE GOOD USE OF MY GHOST-SIGHT.
AND THEY ARE BETTER OFF, HAVING KNOWN YOU.
NOW GO...

DO TREAT YOURSELF TO A HAPPY LIFE, WON'T YOU?
...THINK HE'S WAKING UP! DORIAN!!
OH! WELL, THAT'S GOOD NEWS, THEN.
...GHOSTS AND ALL?
SNIFF... GHOSTS AND ALL.

BACK TO THE ASYLUM WITH YOU, LEITH.
OLD MILL
ON THE GROUNDS OF, WHAT, "INSANITY"? BECAUSE HE SEES GHOSTS?
WE ALL SAW GHOSTS THAT NIGHT.
AYE! I SAW THE BANSHEES WITH MY OWN EYES!
ME TOO!
IF DORIAN HADN'T STEPPED IN...
WE WOULD BE LOST WITHOUT HIM!
IT'S TRUE. DORIAN IS THE REASON WE STAND BEFORE YOU NOW, SANE AND UNHARMED.
I SAW THEM, AS WELL. BRIEFLY, BUT... UNMISTAKABLY. WE AIDED THE...THE GHOSTS, IN RESCUING MR. LEITH FROM BRAMBLES BOG.
SO EITHER WE'RE ALL MAD, OR NONE OF US ARE.
SCRATCH SCRATCH
HRMM...
LET HIM STAY HERE.
WE'LL KEEP AN EYE ON HIM.

WELCOME HOME, LOVE.
CLOSED
WHEN A HOUSE IS BESET WITH A GREAT AND TERRIBLE HAUNTING...
THE PEOPLE OF ROOKWOOD SEND FOR ME.
MORRIGAN WAS RIGHT...THE WORLD DID ITS LEVEL BEST TO BE UNKIND TO ME WHEN I AWOKE, AND MY PATH TO RECOVERY WAS LONG.
BUT FOR EVERY UNKINDNESS...
...THERE WAS SOMEONE READY TO HELP.
THOUGH THE GHOSTS BECAME UNSEEN AGAIN, PUBLIC OPINION OF THEM SHIFTED TREMENDOUSLY.
IT GAVE ME AN IDEA FOR A NEW VENTURE...
LEITH HOUSE


LEITH HOUSE. A HALFWAY HOUSE FOR LOST AND WAYWARD GHOSTS.
WE FIXED UP CAMPBELLS' ABANDONED COTTAGE, AND MADE IT A PROPER HAUNTED HOME.
A PLACE WHERE GHOSTS COULD GATHER, STAY A WHILE, AND SHARE THEIR STORIES.
A PLACE WHERE I CAN HELP THEM, AND THE GHOSTS CAN, IN TURN, HELP EACH OTHER.
PRUDENCE AND GAVIN HELPED ME REALIZE THAT ANY KINDNESS DONE IN THE NAME OF A GHOST CAN HELP HEAL THEIR ROT... AND THOSE KINDNESSES CAN TRANSCEND THIS LIFE, LIMBO, AND PERHAPS THE NEXT ONE, AS WELL.
IT'S A SKILL THAT ANYONE CAN ACQUIRE...NOT JUST THOSE WITH GHOST-SIGHT.
THE CURE FOR A BANSHEE, AS IT TURNS OUT, IS TO TURN ONE'S SORROWS AWAY FROM ONESELF...
AND MOURN WITH THOSE AROUND YOU, WHO HAVE FELT THE SAME PAIN.
MEANWHILE, WORD GOT OUT ABOUT PRUDENCE AND GAVIN'S LETTER-WRITING...
AND SUDDENLY, IT WAS FASHIONABLE FOR EVERYONE IN ROOKWOOD TO HAVE THEIR VERY OWN GHOSTLY PEN FRIEND FROM LEITH HOUSE.
LEITH HOUSE
LETTERS
I OFTEN REFLECT ON MORRIGAN'S WORDS... THE NOTION OF TREATING MYSELF TO A HAPPY LIFE.


IT'S FUNNY: I SPEND MY WORKING HOURS HELPING GHOSTS THROUGH THEIR FEARS, SORROWS, AND SUNDRY ROT, TELLING THEM THAT THEY DESERVE HAPPINESS AND REST...
BUT I HAD NEVER CONSIDERED MYSELF DESERVING OF HAPPINESS, OR EVEN REST, WITHOUT HAVING SOMEHOW EARNED IT.
SO I DECIDED THAT I WOULD BECOME ONE OF MY OWN PATIENTS.
TO KEEP MYSELF ACCOUNTABLE, OF COURSE.
BUT I DON'T REGRET MY FIRST TWO YEARS IN ROOKWOOD, AND THE HARDSHIPS THAT CAME WITH THEM.
IN SPITE OF ANY UNKINDNESS FROM THE WORLD AROUND ME...
ARE YOU SURE?
I'M SURE.
I'M PROUD OF THE WORK I DID FOR THE GHOSTS, AND THE LESSONS I BOTH LEARNED AND IMPARTED.
BOOK ROOK
BOOKSELLERS
BUT I HAVE FOUND GREAT VALUE IN CREATING SPACE.
SPACE WITHIN PAIN...AND SPACE AWAY FROM IT.

OOKBINDING • SECOND HAND
BOOK ROOK
BOOKSELLERS
WELCOM
LUC
SO THAT ONE DAY, WHEN I MEET MORRIGAN AT DEATH'S DOOR AGAIN...
WE CAN BOTH REST, KNOWING THAT I TOOK GOOD CARE OF THIS GHOST OF MINE.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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And finally, thank you to Oscar Wilde, whose body of work—especially his short story *The Canterville Ghost*—captivated my imagination as a young reader, and was the primary inspiration for the story of *The Ghostkeeper*. I wish you could have lived to see the profound impact your literature has had on the world.

# FIFE'S FANTASTICAL SCONES

ghost!

## INGREDIENTS

Flour (3.5 cups / 438 g)
Baking Powder (1 tbsp / 14.75 g)
Brown Sugar (3 tbsp / 41.25 g)
Softened Butter (1 cup / 215.5 g)
Milk (1 cup / 244 g)
Salt (1/4 tsp / 1.5 g)

## RECIPE

- Set your oven's heat to 425° F / 220° C / Gas 7.
- Mix flour and salt in a large bowl, then rub in the butter and knead together until it has a crumbly consistency.
- Stir sugar and baking powder together in separate bowl (making sure to break up any chunks in the sugar until smooth), and mix into flour and butter. Add milk slowly to mixture, and knead together until it forms a dough.
- Cover large mixing bowl of dough with cloth and let sit for 10 minutes.
- Remove dough and place on a floured kitchen surface, then knead by hand until smooth. Cut the dough into small sections with a butter knife, form each section into a 1-inch-thick ball, flatten the top slightly with palm, and cut an X shape into the top of the scone, approximately 1/4-inch deep.
- Place each ball on greased baking sheet and cook in oven for 20 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool for 5 minutes. Serve warm.

↳ and top with cream or strawberries and honey!

—Lucy

MAKES: 12-14 scones.

(OPTIONAL: At the 10-minute mark, take out the scones and brush the tops with a mixture of equal parts milk and brown sugar, then place back in oven to cook for remaining 10 minutes.)

Recipe perfected by renowned Rookwood cook Phineas Fife (the Fifth), written on the gravestone of his grandmother, Fionnuala Fleming Fife.



(Author's note: Adapted from a recipe found in *Instruction in Cookery*, by Miss E. Briggs, published in 1890; London, England)

Dorian Leith can see ghosts.
Not only that, but he listens to their problems and tries to help them move on to the afterlife. It's a gift that's made him an outcast to everyone in town. That is, except for his dearly departed grandmother, who he's partnered with to turn this paranormal ability into an honest living, and the local bookshop owner, who seems to be the only non-deceased person willing to give him a chance. But it's all worth it to Dorian, who feels like he's been given a bigger purpose. A chance to save those who cannot save themselves.
Then one day the key to Death's Door is stolen, trapping all the ghosts in the land of the living. Since he's only one who can see them, the spirits rely on Dorian to retrieve the key before it's too late. If they can't move on, they'll soon be consumed by the ghostly rot that has begun to plague them.
As the rot continues to fester and spread, and the ghosts become desperate for relief, Dorian must do whatever it takes to find a way to bring peace to the restless dead—even if that peace comes at the cost of his own . . .
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